

لِسَمْرَةِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الْمَدْعُوُهُ الَّذِي قَدَّرَ لِلْإِنْدَارِ عَلَى الْمَعْذِيزِ وَعَلَى الْأَطْيَاءِ  
الْعِلْمَ الْكَبِيرَةَ الْرِّياضَةَ وَالْمُهَرَّبَ وَصَاحِبَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْمَرْفَوْنِ  
الْمُلْكَ وَأَعْلَمَ طَبِيبَ عَوْنَوْنَ الْمَعْوُنَ إِلَى الْعِيْرَ وَالْمَبَتِ  
وَسَلَّى الْمُحَاجَهَ وَأَسَاعِيهَ مُلْحَمَهَ حَتَّى قَلَّ بِوْحَسِ  
أَمَانَتُهُ دُلَّلَهُ رَأَى الْفَضَّاصَ فَرَوْكَوْنَ كَوَامَاصَ دِكَهُ

DĀR AS-SUNNAH CLASSIC COLLECTION

# SINCERE COUNSEL TO THE SEEKERS OF SACRED KNOWLEDGE

Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597 AH)



al-Ḥāfiẓ

Abū'l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī [d. 597 AH]

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SINCERE COUNSEL to  
the STUDENTS of  
SACRED KNOWLEDGE

being a translation of his '*Laft al-Kabid ila Nasiba al-Walad*'

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Every breath we take is taking us closer to death. The time we spend in this world is short, the time we are held in our graves is long, and the punishment for following our lowly desires is calamitous.

IBN AL-JAWZĪ [D. 597AH]

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# Sincere Counsel to the Students of Sacred Knowledge

al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū'l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī

An advice to his son  
Abū'l-Qāsim Badr al-Dīn 'Alī

Explained, with critical notes by Ashraf ibn 'Abd al-Maqṣūd

Translation by Aymān ibn Khālid  
Edited by Abū Rumaysah



Dār as-Sunnah Publishers  
B I R M I N G H A M

## CONTENT

Transliteration table.....	11
Acknowledgment.....	12
Preface.....	13
Methodology of Verification and Examination.....	18
BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR	
al-Imām and al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū'l-Faraj ibn al-Jawzī.....	20
His Name and Lineage.....	20
His Birth and Upbringing.....	20
His Teachers.....	21
His Students.....	22
His Children.....	22
His Uniqueness as a preacher.....	23
His Works and Effects.....	24
His Death.....	25
BIOGRAPHY OF THE SON	
Abū'l-Qāsim Badr al-Dīn 'Alī ibn al-Jawzī.....	26

Name, Lineage and Birth.....	26
Studies and Students.....	26
Upbringing and Life with his Father ibn al-Jawzī.....	27
His Death.....	32
 Notification.....	33
 AUTHOR'S PREFACE	
The Reason Behind Writing this Exhortation.....	35
 CHAPTER ONE	
Encouragement and Intimidation Prior to this Beneficial Exhortation.....	38
 CHAPTER TWO	
Obligatory Deeds, Virtuous Voluntary Deeds and High Motivation.....	40
 CHAPTER THREE	
Fear Allah and He Shall Teach You.....	43
 CHAPTER FOUR	
Benefiting from Time and Opportunities.....	48
 CHAPTER FIVE	
What Can this Eternal Life be Bought With?.....	54
 CHAPTER SIX	
Awakening After Heedlessness.....	56

CHAPTER SEVEN	
Methodology of Cultivation by Day and Night.....	59
CHAPTER EIGHT	
Sacred Knowledge Supersedes all Voluntary Actions.....	64
CHAPTER NINE	
Beware of Pitfalls and Obstacles.....	67
CHAPTER TEN	
Self Sufficiency.....	70
CHAPTER ELEVEN	
Real Fear of Allāh Results to All Good.....	72
CHAPTER TWELVE	
The Lives of Our Pious Predecessors.....	76
CHAPTER THIRTEEN	
Memorization is Your Actual Capital.....	78
CHAPTER FOURTEEN	
Knowledge and Action are Intertwined.....	80
CHAPTER FIFTEEN	
Some Excellent Books to Read.....	82
CHAPTER SIXTEEN	
The Characteristics of a Beneficial Preacher.....	84

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN	
Fulfilling the Rights of Others.....	86
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN	
A Beautiful Closure.....	88
THE ARABIC TEXT .....	91
APPENDIX: PERSONS CITED IN THE TEXT.....	146
INDEX OF ARABIC WORDS.....	157-160

## Transliteration Table

### *Consonants. Arabic*

initial: unexpressed medial and final:

ء	d	ض	k
ب b	ذ dh	ط t	ل l
ت t	ر r	ظ z	م m
ث th	ز z	ع '	ن n
ج j	س s	غ gh	ه h
ح h	ش sh	ف f	و w
خ kh	ص s	ق q	ي y

### *Vowels, diphthongs, etc.*

Short:                    - a        - i        - u

اے ay

## Acknowledgment

All praise is due to Allāh with Whose grace all good deeds are realized and the Ṣalāh and Salām of Allāh be upon His Messenger, his family, his companions and all his loyal followers.

It has been reported by Abū Hurayrah (*radiyAllāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“He who does not thank the people does not thank Allāh .”

[Sunan Abū Dāwūd, 4793]

Hence, I would like to extend my thanks to the team members of “Barakah House” for their outstanding endeavors and participation in translating and proofreading this book.

Translator  
Aymān ibn Khālid

## Preface

All praise is due to Allāh; we praise Him, we seek His aid, we seek forgiveness His forgiveness and we ask Him to guide us. We take refuge in Him from the evil of our own selves and from our evil deeds. Whoever Allāh guides, none can lead astray and whoever He misguides, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no true deity save Allāh with no associate and that Muḥammad is His slave and messenger.

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ مَاءَنُوا أَتَقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَعْبُرِهِ وَلَا تُؤْمِنُ إِلَّا وَأَسْمُ  
مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

O you who have believed, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him].

[‘Āli Imrān : 102].

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَتَقُوْرَبُكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَحْدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا  
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَأَنَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي نَسَأَ لَوْنَ  
بِعْدِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one

soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allāh through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allāh is ever, over you, an Observer.

[*An-Nisā'* : 1]

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُلُّوا قَوْلًا سَدِيرًا ﴿٧﴾ يُصْلِحُ  
لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ  
فَقَدْ فَازَ فَرْزَانًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٨﴾

O you who have believed, fear Allāh and speak words of appropriate justice. He will [then] amend for you your deeds and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger has certainly attained a great attainment.

[*Al-Abzab*: 70-71]

The most veracious discourse is the book of (Qur'ān) and the best of all guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad (ﷺ). The worst of affairs are the heresies (those new things which are introduced into the religion), every heresy is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance and all misguidance is in the Fire.

Allāh says in His perfected revelation:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوْلًا أَنْفَسْكُو وَأَهْلِيكُو  
نَارًا وَقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَئِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شَدَادٌ

O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe.

[*Al-Tahrim* : 6].

The commander of the believers, ‘Alī ibn Abī Tālib (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). said: “Teach yourselves and your families all that is good.”<sup>1</sup>

Teaching the good to ourselves and our families is one of the most important pillars that would form the foundation upon which early Islamic society was structured. The Muslim nation today cannot prosper without it as it will only be rectified by that which rectified its early part. After all, the pillars of these teachings were set up by the teacher of humanity, sent by Allāh as a mercy for the worlds, the teacher of good to the people, Muḥammad, the messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).

Just look how he warns his beloved daughter Fāṭima, the first to follow him after his death: “O Fāṭima, daughter of Muḥammad! Save yourself from the Fire, for I cannot protect you from Allah at all.”<sup>2</sup>

The following blessed admonishment that gathers all good in it shines forth brightly when he gives it to his cousin ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) the day he was riding behind him: “O Boy - or little boy -, shall I not teach you some words that Allāh will make beneficial for you?” I said, “Please do so!” He said, “Safeguard Allāh and He will safeguard you. Safeguard Allāh and you will find Him in front of you. Be conscious of Allāh at times of ease and He shall look after you when times are hard.

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<sup>1</sup> Sahīh report: al-Ḥākim (4/494), al-Khaṭīb in *al-Faqīh wa’l-Muṭaṣaqqīb* (1/47), al-Sam’ānī in *Adab al-Umālā’ wa’l-Iṣṭimlā’*, p. 2.

Al-Ḥākim commented on this report: “Ṣahīh, fulfilling the conditions of al-Bukhārī and Muslim though they did not relate it”, and this is the case.

<sup>2</sup> Sahīh Muslim: Book of *Īmān*, Chapter: His saying, “*And warn your close relatives*”, (204, 348), from Abū Hurayrah.

When you ask, ask Allāh, and when you seek aid, turn to Allāh. The pen has dried having written all that is to be. Should each and every created being try to harm you in a way that Allāh has not written for you, they will not be able to do so. Know that patience in the face of disliked things contains great good, victory comes with patience, relief follows hardship and difficulty and ease go hand in hand.””<sup>3</sup>

From this wonderful admonishment Ibn ‘Abbās (*radiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) benefited greatly, becoming the great Imām that he was: the scholar of his time, the interpreter of the Qur’ān and the cultivator of our nation.

As for today, we are about to read the splendid admonishment of an Imām whose name is well known to all and who rightly deserves to be called the preacher of horizons and the pride of Iraq. Many indeed are the eyes that have shed tears after reading it, the hearts it has softened and great indeed is the benefit it contains. Through it the heedless wakes up, the ignorant comes to know and the sinner decides to repent. How excellent is his speech and oratory! He is the one who says: “Be merciful to a tear that is dropping for what it missed from you, and a heart burning due to your farness from it. My God, my God! My knowledge of Your grace makes me avid for You, my certainty of Your Ascendancy [i.e. violent punishment] makes me lose hope of You, and every time I lift the veil of yearning to Your presence, my shyness of You does not allow me. My God! To You and by You I humble myself, and towards You I direct.”

May Allāh have mercy on Ibn al-Jawzī, be pleased with him and

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<sup>3</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ: See p. 25 for more details.

gather us all as members of the saved and victorious group.<sup>4</sup>

Glory be to You, O Allāh, and You we praise. I bear witness that there is no God worthy of worship except You, seeking Your forgiveness and repenting to You.

Ashraf 'Abd al-Maqṣūd  
Isma'iliyya,  
Friday 26<sup>th</sup> Ṣafar, 1409 A.H.

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<sup>4</sup> May Allāh guide me and you as we read the following words of al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī in *Saīd al-Khaṭīr*, p. 236 and contemplate on how he was: 'I sat down one day and looked around me, saw more than 10 000 people, emotions were high and some were shedding tears. I thought to myself: 'How will you be if they achieve salvation and you don't?' This made me cry out: 'My Lord and deity! Should You sentence me to be punished tomorrow, do not let them know of this! I ask this not for me but in order for them not to doubt Your grace and say: 'Does He punish someone who calls to Him?''' cf. Ibn Rajab, *Lāṭa'if al-Ma'ārif*, p. 171 for more information.

# Methodology of Verification and Examination

In this edition of the book I have done the following:

1. Referencing the Qur'ānic verses.
2. Referencing each ḥadīth attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) and mentioning its level of authenticity. If a ḥadīth can be found in one or both of Bukhārī and Muslim, I have sufficed with attributing the ḥadīth to them as this automatically indicates that the ḥadīth is authentic. This is also the methodology of al-Ḥāfiẓ al-‘Irāqī in his critical ḥadīth analysis of *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*. These notes are brief in order to ensure that the reader doesn't get distracted from the actual content of the book.
3. Including biographies of the famous people mentioned in the book and mentioned some of their life-conditions.
4. Adding a heading for each section of the book as appropriate.
5. Commenting on some parts of the text as needed. These comments revolve around asceticism, academic notes, and details of fine conduct.
6. Adding the vocals for the ḥadīths, other reports and poetry

mentioned in the book as well as some individual words that occur in it.<sup>5</sup> The copy I have relied on was printed by al-Matba'a al-Salafiyya in Cairo. This book has been printed numerous times. al-Matba'a al-Sunna al-Muhammadiyya has done so with the verification work done by Sh. Hāmid al-Fata, may Allāh have mercy on him, and this print can be found in the *Min Dafā'in al-Kunūz* collection. We also have the al-Matba'a al-Salafiyya, Cairo print, which was worked on by Sh. Muhibb al-Din al-Khaṭīb, may Allāh have mercy on him, the Maktaba Hamidu, Alexandria print with the verification work done by Dr. Fu'ād 'Abd al-Mun'im Ahmād. There is also the print of al-Maktaba al-Islāmi with the verification of Dr. Mirwān al-Qabbānī, among others.

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<sup>5</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabi said in *al-Siyar*, 21/375 that this text is a part of some other text..

## THE BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

# al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū'l-Faraj 'Abdu'l-Rahmān Ibn Jawzī

### His Name and Lineage

He is Abū'l-Faraj Jāmal al-Dīn 'Abdu'l-Rahmān ibn 'Alī ibn Muhammad ibn 'Alī Ibn 'Ubayd Allāh Ibn al-Jawzī al-Qurashī al-Tamimi al-Bakrī from the family of Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr *al-Siddīq*, al-Baghdādī al-Ḥanbalī.<sup>6</sup>

### His Birth and Upbringing

He was born in 509 or 510 A.H. Upon reaching adolescence, his aunt took him to Ibn Nāṣir from whom he learned a great deal. He came to love preaching while barely having reached the age of puberty, and from then started to give sermons to the people.

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<sup>6</sup> *Thaīl al-Raudatāin*, p.21, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, p. 13/26.

His father passed away when he was three years old so his aunt took care of him. His relatives were copper merchants so at times in hadith hearings he would write his name as 'Abdu'l-Rahmān ibn 'Alī al-Ṣaffār [i.e. The Coppersmith].

His first ḥadīth hearing was in 156 A.H., as cited by al-Dhahabi<sup>7</sup>

While still very young he became known as a religious person who would not socialise with anyone and would not eat from any food whose source was doubtful. He would only leave his house for prayer and he would not play with other kids. He was a person of very great determination and ambition and he spent all his life busy in seeking knowledge, preaching and authoring.<sup>8</sup>

## His Teachers

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī has already introduced his teachers in his book *Mashyakhat Ibn al-Jawzī* [i.e. the scholars who taught Ibn al-Jawzī] where he listed many of them. In the field of ḥadīth he benefitted from accompanying Ibn Nāṣir, in Qur'ān and Adab [i.e. Manners] from Sibṭ al-Khiyāt and Ibn al-Jawāliqī. He was the last to narrate from al-Dīnawārī and al-Mutawakkilī.<sup>9</sup>

## His Students

Those who narrated from him include his son and companion,

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<sup>7</sup> *Thail al-Raudatāin*, 21, *Thail 'ala Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/401, *Shatharāt al-Thahab*, 4/330.

<sup>8</sup> *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nibāyah*, 13/29, *Said al-Khāṭir*, 238.

<sup>9</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lam al-Nubulā'*, 21/366, 367.

the great scholar Muhyī al-Dīn Yūsuf who was a teacher in the institute of al-Musta'sim billāh, his oldest son 'Alī al-Nāsikh, his grandson, the preacher Shams al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Farghālī al-Hanafī the author of *Mir'āt al-Zamān* (Mirror of Time), al-Ḥāfiẓ 'Abd al-Ghanī, Shaykh Muwaffaq al-Dīn Ibn Qudāma, Ibn al-Dubaythī, Ibn al-Nājjar and al-Diyā.<sup>10</sup>

## His Children

His grandson Abū al-Muẓfir and majority of those who wrote his biography say that he had three sons:

1. The oldest of them, Abū Bakr 'Abd al-'Azīz: He became a jurist in the school of Aḥmad and took knowledge from Abū al-Waqt, Ibn Nāṣir, al-Armawī and a group of his father's teachers. He traveled to the city of al-Musul where he preached and held sermons there for which he earned the people full acceptance. It is said that the family of al-Zahrazurī used to be jealous of him so they made someone put poison in his drink which caused him to die in al-Mūsul in 554 A.H. during the lifetime of his father.<sup>11</sup>
2. Abū al-Qāsim Badr al-Dīn 'Alī al-Nāsikh: A separate biography of him will follow. He is the one his father is addressing in this book.
3. Abū Muḥammad Yūsuf Muhyī al-Dīn<sup>12</sup>: He was the most

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<sup>10</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lam al-Nubulā'*, #21, 367.

<sup>11</sup> *Thālib Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/430, 431.

<sup>12</sup> cf. *Siyar al-Ā'lam al-Nubulā'*, 23/372, *al-'Ibar*, 5/237, *Dūwal al-Islām*, 2/122, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 13/203, *Thālib Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 2/258-261, *al-'Uṣjud al-Masbūk*, 635, *Shātharāt al-Thabāb*, 5/286287, Ibn Shāṭī: *Mukhtasar Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, p.57.

intelligent and youngest son as he was born in 580 A.H. He became involved in preaching and held sermons after his father, in which he excelled and by which he was looked up to by his confreres. He then was appointed to control and supervise markets of Baghdād, and after that he was assigned to deliver the messages of the caliphs to kings of other different regions peculiarly to the Ayyūbī family in the Shām region. He held the position of teacher in the institute of caliph al-Mustā' sim in 640 A.H. till he was killed in prison in 656 A.H. by Hulaku who occupied Bagdād and destroyed it. His three sons Jāmal al-Dīn, Sharaf al-Dīn and Tāj al-Dīn were killed with him. He has authored many works, including *Mā'adīn al-Abriż fi Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-'Ażīż* and *al-Madhab al-Abmad fi Madhab Abmad*. Unlike his brother Abu al-Qāsim, he was a dutiful son who honored his father and treated him well.

His grandson mentioned that Ibn al-Jawzī had many daughters; Rabi'a, Sharaf al-Nisā', Zainab, Jauhara, Sitt al-'Ulama al-Sughra and Sitt al-'Ulama al-Kubrā.<sup>13</sup>

## His Uniqueness as a Preacher

Excellent indeed are the words of al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī about him: 'He was the leading figure in reminding the people and had no equal. He would recite pleasant poetry and eloquent prose spontaneously and his fine words and moving speech was abundant. There has never been anyone like him, not before him and not after him. He is the carrier of the flag of exhortation in its various forms. He had a pleasant appearance and a good voice and his

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<sup>13</sup> *Mir'āt al-Zamān*, 8/503, Abū Shamma: *Thail al-Raudatāin*, 26.

talks had an impact on peoples' hearts. His lifestyle in general was beautiful.<sup>14</sup> He also said: 'I believe there will not be another one like him.'<sup>15</sup>

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab said: 'So we conclude that his gatherings of exhortation were one of a kind and nobody had heard of anything like them. They were gatherings of great benefit where the heedless would be reminded, the ignorant would come to know, the sinners would repent and the polytheists would become Muslims.'<sup>16</sup>

## His Works and Effects

Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said in *al-Ajwiba al-Misriyyah*: 'Shaikh Abū'l-Faraj excelled in many sciences and has many writings to his account. He would write on many topics, and as I counted his works I found them to be over one thousand in number. Afterwards, I found out about other works as well.'<sup>17</sup>

Having mentioned some of his books, al-Dhahabī said: 'I don't know of a scholar who has written what this man has.'<sup>18</sup>

The virtuous teacher 'Abd al-Hamīd al-'Alūjī has written a book on his works which was printed in Baghdaḍ in 1965. In this piece

<sup>14</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā*, 21/367.

<sup>15</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā*, 21/384.

<sup>16</sup> *Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/410.

<sup>17</sup> *Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/415, *al-Tāj al-Mukallal*, #70.

<sup>18</sup> *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1344.

he researched their titles, their copies and copies that had been printed and put them in alphabetic order. Whoever wishes to know about these books should refer to this work, keeping in mind that many of the manuscripts mentioned therein by al-‘Alūjī have now been printed.

## His Death

Ibn al-Jawzī passed away on Friday the 12th of Ramadān in 597 A.H and was buried at Bāb Harb.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> For a more detailed biography of al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī, refer to: Ibn Athir's *al-Kamil*, 12/71, Sibt Ibn al-Jawzī: *Mir'āt al-Zamān*, 8/481, al-Mundhirī: *al-Takmila*, Biography #608, al-Bāggħal: *al-Mashyakha*, #140, Abū Shāmma: *Thāil al-Rauḍatain*, #21, Ibn al-Sā'i: *al-Jāmi'*, 9/65, Ibn Khalkān: *al-Wafyāt*, 3/140, al-Dhahabī: *al-'Ibar*, 4/297, *Dūwal al-Islām*, 2/79, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 4/1342, *Siyar al-Ālam al-Nubulā'*, 21/365, Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 13/26, Ibn Rajab: *Thāil Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/399, al-Jazari: *Ghāyat wa'l-Nihāyah*, 1/375, Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan: *al-Tāj al-Mukallal*, #70, Ibn Shattī: *Mukhtasar Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, p. 42.

## THE BIOGRAPHY OF THE SON

# Abū'l-Qāsim Badr al-Dīn 'Alī ibn al-Jawzī

### Name, Lineage and Birth

He is Badr al-Dīn Abū'l-Qāsim 'Alī, the son of the Shaikh and Imām Abū'l-Faraj 'Abdu'l-Rahmān ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-Jawzī al-Bakrī, al-Baghdādī al-Nāsikh.

He was born in Ramadān in 551 A.H.<sup>20</sup> which was approximately 30 years before the birth of his brother Yūsuf Muhyī al-Dīn.

### Studies and Students

He studied under Abū'l-Faraj al-Baṭṭī, Yahyā ibn Thābit, Abū Zur'a, Aḥmad ibn al-Muqarrab, minister ibn Hubaira and Shuhda.

Al-Sayf narrated from him as well as 'Izz al-Dīn 'Abdu'l-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Maqdīsī, al-Taqī ibn al-Wāsiṭī,

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<sup>20</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā*, 22/352.

al-Ķāmal ‘Alī ibn al-Wađđāh, Abū'l-Faraj ibn al-Zain, Abū al-‘Abbās al-Fārūthī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Hubaira the resident of Bilbeis. He gave permission to Abū Naṣr ibn al-Shīrāzī and al-Qādī the Ḥanbālī to narrate from him.

Ibn Nuqṭa said: ‘He relates with accuracy, is trustworthy, has memorized a lot and presents his ḥadīth in a fine manner. He heard the Sahih of al-Iṣmā‘il from Yāḥyā ibn Thabit.’<sup>21</sup>

### Upbringing and Life with his Father al-Imām ibn al-Jawzī

One may ask why Ibn al-Jawzī chose to advice this son of his, and the answer can be easily found by looking into their life together. The author says in the preface that having found his son somewhat careless about seeking knowledge, he decided to write some words of encouragment to him to get him motivated. The scholars’ comments about him give us the following picture of Abū'l-Qāsim’s life with his father; al-Imām Ibn al-Jawzī:

He was a good child from the very beginning to the point that Ibn al-Najjār said: ‘He preached and gave sermons when he was a child.’<sup>22</sup> Al-Dhahabī said: ‘He preached for some time and then quit. He was extraordinarily eloquent in much of his speech and pleasant in his jesting.’<sup>23</sup> This indicates that his upbringing and early childhood were like those of his father and his brother Muhyī al-Dīn Yūsuf.

<sup>21</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 22/353.

<sup>22</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 22/353.

<sup>23</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 22/352.

However, at some point before the birth of his brother Muhyī al-Dīn Yūsuf in 580 A.H., he began to spend his days in idle play, leaving his previous activities as a preacher and wasting his time doing impermissible things. This is verified by al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī himself in this advice as he says: ‘Out of my sons only Abū'l-Qāsim is left, so I have asked Allāh to make him a pious successor and an ideal son who shall achieve success. However, I found him somewhat careless of studying Sacred Knowledge so I decided to write these words to him.’

He gave this excellent and also obligatory advice to his only son at the time, following the words of Allāh:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ مَا مَنَّا فَوْأَنَفْسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِكُمْ

O Believers! Protect yourselves and your families from fire...

[*Surah at-Tahrim* : 6]

Still, despite his efforts, it seems that his son did not take heed of his words which caused his father to abandon him and cut all relations between them. Some of the things that made him go to this extent were his son’s habit of engaging in impermissible activities and having friends who were busy with idle play and corrupt lifestyle. He had become a person inclined towards amusement and moral depravity.

Ibn al-Najjār said: ‘He was very much inclined towards amusement and dissipation, so he left preaching, became involved in impermissible affairs and kept corrupt company.’<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Siyar al-Ālam al-Nubulā'*, 22/353.

The reader can perceive this as the text goes on and also see how the author forbids his son from doing these things.

We are now speaking of the life of a son with a father who was praised by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī in his words: 'I do not think time will allow another one like him to appear.' Therefore, it is especially sad to know how this son mistreated his father who in his advice obviously fears that his son will be cast into the Fire and the punishment of Hell. You see him fearing for his son lest he abandons something that is virtuous and good and yet still he continued to disrespect and mistreat him. So far he went that during the trial of his father, the times of trial in general and other times, he was harboring enmity towards him. Then, having got a hold of his books in Wasit he sold them for a pathetic price. This was related by Ibn al-Jawzī's grandson Abū al-Muẓafir from his grandfather: 'Of sons he left behind 'Alī, and he is the one who took his father's books and sold them for a slave-price unless somebody wanted to pay more. When his father was coming to Wasit he made his way to the books at night, took what he wanted and sold them for cheaper than the ink they were written in. His father had abandoned him years ago, so when he was tried he only showed enmity towards him.'<sup>25</sup>

Ibn al-Najjār said: 'I heard his father say: 'Truly, I make *du'ā* against him every night before Fajr.'<sup>26</sup>

Al-Dhahabī pointed this out as well, saying: 'He would disre-

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<sup>25</sup> *Mir'āt al-Zamān*, 8/502-503, *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 21/384.

<sup>26</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 22/353.

spect his father and has also been told to have profited from his books.<sup>27</sup>

Later on, Allāh compensated al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī with a dear companion and a dutiful son, the great scholar and teacher in the Caliph’s region, Yūsuf Muhyī al-Dīn.

Ibn al-Sibā‘ī said of him, ‘He is a virtuous scholar and a great, exemplary person. One of the great personalities in the field of Sacred Knowledge and famous for his virtues. The divine providence appeared on him from the very beginning of his childhood, so his father took care of him, teaching him Hadith and training him to deliver sermons ever since he was a child. He was given much good in the field and received complete acceptance from the people and the signs of grace in him were evident.’<sup>28</sup>

This dutiful son, who from his young age worked in preaching, was also the reason why ibn al-Jawzī was saved when a calamity befell him in the late part of his life when some people slandered him before the Caliph al-Nāṣir. His loyal student, though still a youth, pleaded the Caliph’s mother to help his teacher and spiritual father so she interceded with the Caliph who then released the Shaikh. His loyal student; Yūsuf then came and took him away.<sup>29</sup>

When al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī was 80 years old he would study Sacred Knowledge together with him and did not return from

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<sup>27</sup> *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 22/352.

<sup>28</sup> *Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 2/258, 259.

<sup>29</sup> *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 21/377.

Wasit until he and his student completed reciting the Qur'ān in the ten ways in the presence of Ibn al-Baqillānī.<sup>30</sup>

The Shaikh loved his loyal student Yūsuf very much to the level it is said that he has said: 'When I was in Wāsit I completed the Qur'ān every day, but I did not read Sūrah Yūsuf due to my sadness of us being apart.'<sup>31</sup> He also authored a book of his sermons called *al-Majālis al-Yūsufiyya*.<sup>32</sup>

At this point, it is fitting to mention some of the good sides of ibn al-Jawzī's undutiful son as well even though he did not take heed of the advice while his brother Yūsuf benefitted from it.

Al-Dhahabī said in his biography of Abū'l-Qāsim 'Alī: 'The virtuous and reliable shaikh...He was extraordinarily eloquent and knew the art of jesting...He was abstinent, serving his own self.'

Ibn Kathīr said: 'He was a gentle and fine shaikh.'<sup>33</sup>

Ibn al-Najjār said he used to write ten fascicles every day.

It is agreed that he prayed the funeral prayer for his father, as mentioned by ibn al-Jawzī's grandson.

So we ask Allāh All-Mighty to have guided this son to repent

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<sup>30</sup> *Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/427.

<sup>31</sup> Ibn Shāṭī: *Mukhtasar Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, p.46.

<sup>32</sup> *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 13/136.

<sup>33</sup> *Siyar al-Ā'lam al-Nubulā'*, 22/3, Ibn Kathīr: wafayat sana 630 AH - *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*.

before his death from that which occurred between him and his father, the Imam, the scholar, the preacher of horizons, Shaikh al-Islam and pride of ‘Irāq, Jāmal al-Dīn Abū'l-Faraj ‘Abdu'l-Rahmān ibn al-Jawzī. May Allāh have mercy on him, be pleased with his deeds and make him settled next to Him.

## Death

Abū'l-Qāsim ‘Alī died in the last days of Ramadān in 630 AH.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 2/260.

## Notification

The following is written on the cover of the *al-Sunna al-Muhammadiyya* print which is included in the *Min Dāfai'in al-Kunūz* collection and edited by Shaikh Muhammād Ḥāmid al-Faqī as well as the cover of the al-Matba'a al-Salafiyya, Cairo print, which was printed with the work of Shaikh Muhibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb:

‘He gave this advice to his son whose kunya was Abū'l-Qāsim, born in 580 A.H. and killed in the battle of the Tatar in Baghdaḍ in 656 A.H..’

It preceded, however, that the one killed in the battle of the Tatar along with his three sons was Yūsuf Muhyī al-Dīn. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab says: ‘His happiness was sealed with martyrdom, may Allāh be pleased with him. Shaikh 'Abd al-Ṣamad ibn Abū al-Jaysh said: ‘It was conveyed to me that Shaikh Muhammād ibn Sakrān, the famous abandoner of vanities, said: ‘I saw the teacher of the regime Ibn al-Jawzī in my dream and said to him: ‘What did Allāh do with you?’ to which he replied: ‘Their swords compensated for our sins.’ May Allāh be pleased with him.’<sup>35</sup> Abū'l-Qāsim 'Alī died

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<sup>35</sup> For more detail on the biography of Abū'l-Qāsim 'Alī, the son of the Shaikh and Imām Abū'l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī, refer to: Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī: *Mir'āt al-Zamān*,

in 630 A.H. in Ramadān and the one who was really killed in the battle of the Tatar was his brother Yūsuf Muhyī al-Dīn, and this error should be noted.

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8/678, 679. al-Munthirī: *al-Takmilah*, 3/Biography 2489, al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī: *al-Ṭabarī*, 5/120, *Sīyar al-Ālam al-Nubulā'*, 22/352, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 13/136, *Shātharāt al-Thahab*, 5/137.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

# The Reason Behind Writing this Exhortation

**I**N THE NAME OF ALLĀH, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful. It is His aid that we seek.

All praise be to Allāh who produced our forefather from dirt and brought out his offspring from between the ribs and the backbone. Praise be to Him who made kinship and lineage a support for kinsfolk, blessed me with knowledge and the understanding of what is correct, cultivated me well as a child, protected me in my youth and gave me offspring who will hopefully be a reason for abundant rewards.

رَبِّ أَجْعَلْنِي مُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي رَبِّنَا وَتَقْبَلْنِي  
دُعَائِهِ رَبِّنَا أَغْفِرْنِي وَلَوْلَدِي وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ  
الْحِسَابُ

My Lord, make me an establisher of prayer, and [many] from my descendants. Our Lord, and accept my sup-

plication. Our Lord, forgive me and my parents and the believers the Day the account is established.

[*Sūrah Ibrāhīm* : 40-41]

Once I learned the virtue of marriage and having children,<sup>36</sup> I read the whole Qur’ān<sup>37</sup> and then asked Allāh, the Most High, to give me ten children. He answered my request and gave me five boys and five girls. Two of the girls and four of the boys passed away<sup>38</sup> and of the boys only Abu'l-Qāsim<sup>39</sup> remains alive. I asked

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<sup>36</sup> In *Siyar al-A'lām al-Nubulā'*, 21/375, al-Dhahabī mentions a book by Ibn al-Jawzī called *al-Hatth 'ala Talab al-Walad*. May Allah give us a pious progeny.

<sup>37</sup> Know, may Allāh have mercy on us, that invocation after completing the Qur’ān is something our pious predecessors used to do. It was related about Anas that, “Whenever he would complete the whole Qur’ān he would gather his children and household and invoke Allāh for them.” This was related by al-Darimi (3474). It was related by Ibn Abi Dāwūd with two shāhīh chains as mentioned by the God fearing Imām al-Nawawī (*al-Atbākār*, p. 191). Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Hajr said (*Al-Futuhat al-Rabbaniyya*, 3/344): “This is a mauqūf Shāhīh narration.”

<sup>38</sup> This is problematic from two angles:

1. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī left two sons behind him: Yūsuf Muhyī al-Dīn (580-656) who was killed by Hulakū when he entered Baghdad and destroyed it and Abu'l-Qāsim 'Alī (551-630) who Ibn al-Jawzī is addressing in this book.
2. Ibn al-Jawzī had more than five daughters as his grandson Abū al-Muẓafir mentioned a sixth one as preceded.

The issue can be solved by looking at the times of death in this case. It seems that this was the situation at the time of his writing this book which was before his son Yūsuf Muhyī al-Dīn was born in 580 and after his oldest son Abū Bakr 'Abdu'l-'Azīz, died in 554. It might also be that he had other children in addition to this Yusuf of his. This also clarifies the second problem as we can assume that he had one more daughter after writing this book.

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Allāh to make him a pious successor and an ideal son who shall achieve success. However, I found him somewhat careless in his pursuit of Sacred Knowledge and so I decided to write him these words encouraging him to take my path in studying, and to direct him towards recoursing to the granter of accord, the Glorious and Most High. I acknowledge that none can abandon the one He gives success to and none can guide the one He leads astray, but Allāh, Most High, has also said:

﴿وَتَوَاصُوا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصُوا بِالصَّابِرِ﴾

And advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.

[*Sūrah al-'Aṣr: 3*]

and

﴿فَذَكِّرْنَاهُنَّ تَفَعَّلُ الْذِكْرَ﴾

So remind if reminding is of benefit.

[*Sūrah al-'A'lā: 9*]

All power and strength is in Allāh's hands alone, High and Mighty is He.

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<sup>39</sup> He is Abu'l-Qāsim Badr al-Dīn 'Alī al-Nasīkh. His biography has already been mentioned and we learned that he used to mistreat his father who was not pleased with his ways and finally abandoned him for years. He died in 630.

## CHAPTER ONE

# Encouragement and Intimidation Prior to This Beneficial Exhortation

**Y**OU SHOULD KNOW, my son, may Allāh guide you to what is right, that man has been distinguished by intellect only so that he would act according to it. Bring it to the fore, use it in contemplation and spend time alone with yourself. You will conclude that you are a created being who has responsibilities and obligations and that the two angels are counting your every word and glance. Every breath is a step closer to death. The time we spend in this world is short, the time we are held in our graves is long, and the punishment for following our base desires is calamitous.

Where is the delight of yesterday? It has departed leaving only regret in its wake. Where is the soul's desire? How many has it brought low, how many has it caused to slip and falter? People have only attained happiness by going against their lusts and desires. People have only become wretched by giving preference to the life of this world. Learn from the lives of kings and ascetics: where is the delight of the kings and where is the weariness of

the ascetics? The only thing left is the abundant reward and beautiful mention for the pious, and the malicious words and calamitous punishment for the disobedient. It is as if those who starved never starved and those who ate to their fill never did so. Laziness in virtuous deeds is an evil companion indeed, and love of comfort causes regret greater than any enjoyment. So take heed and tire yourself for your self.

Know, that performing the obligatory and avoiding the forbidden is a must; whenever a person transgresses the limits let him beware of the Fire. Then know that aspiring to virtuous deeds is the highest goal of those who strive yet virtuous deeds vary in status and ranks; some people consider them to mean abstaining from worldly vanities and others think they stand for dedicating oneself for worship. The truth, however, is that complete virtue is nothing but joining knowledge with action. When these two are combined they raise a person to the level of truly knowing the Creator, Exalted and Most High, causing him to love, fear and yearn for Him. This is the true goal. People also vary in determination: not everybody who wants is wanted and not everybody who seeks finds what he is looking for. Still, everyone must strive to reach their goals because “everyone is eased towards what he is created for.”<sup>40</sup>

Allāh is the source of all help.

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<sup>40</sup> The wording of this sentence is a *ṣahīh* *ḥadīth* of the Prophet (ﷺ) from ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭalib (al-Bukhārī: *Kitab al-Jana’iz*, 1362, *Chapter: Preaching by the grave while one’s companions are sitting around oneself*, 1362, Muslim: *Kitab al-Qadr*, *Chapter: How man was created*, 2647, 6).

## CHAPTER TWO

# Obligatory Deeds, Virtuous Voluntary Deeds and High Motivation

THE FIRST THING A PERSON SHOULD pay attention to is knowing Allāh, Most High, through His signs. It is obvious that anyone who sees how the sky has been raised and the earth laid out, and observes how perfectly different things - especially his own body - have been made, knows that every construction must have a maker and everything built must have a builder.

Then he should contemplate the proofs of the Messenger's (ﷺ) truthfulness. The greatest of which is the Qur'ān, which Allāh declared to be inimitable by man even if they would only attempt to compose one *Surah* like it. Once he is certain of the Creator's existence and the truthfulness of the Messenger (ﷺ), he has to submit to the Sacred Law because not submitting to the Sacred Law is indicative of corrupt belief.

After this he must know the obligatory things related to Wudū' (ablution), Ṣalāh (prayer), Zakāh (obligatory alms) - if he has wealth

- , Hajj (pilgrimage) and other obligatory actions. Once he has learned the obligatory parts of these, he must implement them.

A man of high ambition and strong determination should proceed and advance to the level of virtuous voluntary actions. He ought to busy himself with memorising the Qur'ān and studying its explanation along with the ḥadīth of the Messenger (ﷺ). He should also learn about his (ﷺ) life, the life of his companions and the scholars who came after them. Let one adapt to higher ranks then advance to the highest rank.

He must also know enough Arabic grammar and commonly used language to speak properly.

Jurisprudence is the basis of all sciences, but reminding of the afterlife is the sweetest and most beneficial on a more general scale. Praise be to Allāh, for by His grace I have been able to compose some books in these fields that spare you the need of looking into the books of past scholars or any other books for that matter<sup>41</sup> This being the case, there is no need for you to search for books or to focus your efforts in authoring them. The ambition or aspiration of a person only falters or fails if it is weak and feeble; when it is lofty, you will never be satisfied with anything less.

Evidence tells you that high aspiration and determination is in man's innate nature. It is only during certain times that these are weak, and they only need to be encouraged to be strong again. When you find yourself incapable, ask The Benefactor, and when you feel indolent, turn to the Giver of opportunity. You will only

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<sup>41</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said in (*Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1344): "I do not know of a scholar who has written what this man has."

achieve good by obeying Him, and no good will bypass you except due to your disobedience. Have you not seen that obedient ones always reach their goals! And have you not seen that disobedient never succeed or achieve their goals! Have you not heard the poet say<sup>42</sup>:

By Allāh, never have I come to visit you  
Except that the earth compacted before me.  
I have never resolved to leave your door  
Except that I tripped over my garment's tail.

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<sup>42</sup> *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'* (21/58), said to be poetry of al-Murtaḍā, the father of al-Imām Abū al-Fadā' il Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Qāsim ibn Muẓfir al-Shāfi'i with *yā lail* in the place of *Allāh*.

## CHAPTER THREE

# Fear Allāh and He Shall Teach You

OBERVE, MY SON, the way you deal with the limits of Allāh and see how you can keep yourself within their bounds. Indeed, he who takes care of these limits is taken care of, and he who doesn't, is left to himself. I shall now mention some of my experiences to you so that you may observe my striving and ask the Granter of success to bless me. Truly, most of the blessings I have been given have not been earned by me but rather they are conferred as a result of the planning of The Gentle One alone.

I remember myself as a child: A highly motivated six-year old sitting in class with older boys.<sup>43</sup> The intellect I had been given

<sup>43</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī about his high motivation in different places of *Said al-Khaṭir* and we shall mention some of it here (238): “Never has a man been tried with anything greater than his high ambitions. This is because a person who has high ambitions will choose the highest goals and it may be that he doesn't have enough time to achieve them or his instruments are too weak so he remains in constant suffering. I have been given this ambition in some regards and suffer because of it. I am not saying that I wish it would have not been given to me, for the sweeter the life the less the intellect; and an intelligent man does not purchase additional pleasure for deficient intellect.” He also said (239):

superseded that of old men. I do not recall myself playing on the road with other kids or ever laughing out loud<sup>44</sup>.

When I was seven or so, I attended the gatherings in the Masjid. I would not sit in a circle of mere wordplay, but searched for a ḥadīth scholar who would narrate about the Prophet's (ﷺ) life. I would memorize everything he said, then go back home and write it down. I was blessed for being granted my teacher Abū al-Fadl ibn Nāṣir, may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him,<sup>45</sup> who would take me to different scholars and let me hear the *Musnad* [of Imām

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“I looked at my high ambition and was amazed by it: I want to gain knowledge of things I’m sure I can never gain knowledge of because I would love to learn every single science in great detail. Truth is, however, that learning just a portion of that takes more than a lifetime.” He also tells how he still had these ambitions as a grownup (250, 251): “I was given an extremely high ambition. I grew up and never achieved what I hoped for. I began asking Allāh for a long life, strong body and the achievement of my goals. The customs and habits of people renounced what I was doing and said: “No custom exists in what you seek.” I replied, saying: “I only ask from One who is able to go beyond customs.”

<sup>44</sup> For verification of this, refer to: Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 13/29.

<sup>45</sup> The Imām, Muḥaddith and Ḥāfiẓ, Muṣṭafā al-‘Iraqī, Abu al-Fadl Muḥammad ibn Nāṣir ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Amm al-Salāmī from Baghdaḍ (467-551). Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī benefitted in the field of ḥadīth by accompanying this Imām as indicated by Dhahabī (*Siyar al-Ā'lam al-Nubulā'*, 21/367) and confirmed by al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī himself (*al-Muntaẓam*, 10/163). Al-Dhahabī also related this from him (*al-Miṣān*, 20/267), saying: “He said: ‘Our shaikh was reliable, a man of good memory and precision. He was from Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah and had not faults worth mentioning. He was responsible of hearing me. I heard the *Musnad* of Ahmad and the major books in his reading and it was he whom I took the science of ḥadīth from. He would remember Allāh a lot and was quick to shed tears.’ For his biography, refer to: *Siyar al-Ā'lam al-Nubulā'*, 20/265, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 3/1289, *Maṇāqib Ahmad*, 530, 531, *Miṛāt al-Zamān*, 8/138, *Thaīl Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/225-229, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 12/233.

Aḥmad] and other major works. All this time I had no idea of why I was made to do these things. My teacher recorded all I had heard, and when I reached puberty he handed me this record. I accompanied him till his death, and through him I learned the science of ḥadīth and transmission.

The kids used to go down to Tigris River and play on the bridge, but when I was small I used to take a book and sit far from people by the shore studying Sacred Knowledge<sup>46</sup>.

Then I was inspired to abandon the vanities of this world so I began constant fasting and reduced my food intake to very little. I trained myself to be patient, embarking on a continuous pursuit in order to do so and staying up at night. I didn't feel satisfied with studying just one science<sup>47</sup> so I read jurisprudence, sermon delivery and ḥadīth and followed those who practiced *zuhd* (as-

<sup>46</sup> May Allāh have mercy on Ibn al-Jawzī for he was serious about his studies in both his childhood and after growing up. He dedicated himself to learning and would not allow anything of his time to be wasted. He says about himself (*Said al-Khaṭīr*, 235): “During my pursuit of this quest for knowledge I would go through difficulties that, to me, were sweeter than honey due to what I was expecting to gain. When I was small I used to take some dry bread with me and go out to learn ḥadīth. I would sit by the ‘Īsa river, and as I was unable to eat the bread without washing it down with water, I took a sip after every bite. My ambition only allowed me to see the delight of learning. Due to that I became known for having heard much of the ḥadīth of Allāh’s Messenger and his conditions and ways along with the life of his companions and their followers. My dealings with the creation also elevated to a level that cannot be achieved except through knowledge. In my childhood and during the times of lust and being a stranger I could have done things that the soul desires like a thirsty man does cold water, and only the fear of Allāh caused by knowledge stopped me from doing them.”

<sup>47</sup> He also said about himself (*Said al-Khaṭīr*, 37): “I am a man to whom knowl-

ceticism). After that I studied linguistics.

There was not a narrating scholar or a preacher where I lived who I didn't sit with and whenever such a person would arrive from elsewhere I would go to him. I used to choose of virtuous deeds what suited me and if I had to choose between two things I usually chose the right of *al-Haqq* (Allāh). He has planned my life and cultivated me in a beautiful fashion, guiding me towards what is best for me. He has protected me from my enemies, the jealous, and those who might plot against me. He has made everything convenient for my studies of Sacred Knowledge and sent me books from unexpected places. He gave me good understanding, the ability to memorize and write quickly and a talent for authoring books.

I lacked nothing of this world. As a matter of fact, things were quite the opposite as Allāh gave me more than enough. He put a great deal of acceptance of me into peoples' hearts and made the impact of my words leave them not questioning the authenticity of what I had to say. Approximately 200 *thimmis* [i.e. people of the book who live in Muslim lands according to a truce contract]

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edge was made dear since childhood, so I began studying. I was not drawn towards one particular science but all of them. When I studied one, I would not just learn some of it but wanted to learn it inside out." He studied every single day of his life to such an extent that not long before his death he still read the Qur'ān with its narrations to Ibn al-Baqillānī as mentioned by al-Hāfiẓ al-Dhahabī: "He was 80 years old and read the ten readings in Wasit to Ibn al-Baqillānī along with his son Yusuf." This upbringing during which he was inspired to worship Allāh by fasting and praying had a great effect on this Imam since he was a child. He says about himself (*Saīd al-Khāṭir*, 78): "I was inspired to follow the path of the ascetics in the very beginning of my childhood so I practiced continuous fasting and praying and staying by myself was made dear to me. I observed how my heart became good and I started to have a very deep insight into things."

have become Muslim at my hands and over 100 000 sinners have repented in my gatherings. More than 20 000 men have announced their repentance from foolish ways during my exhortations.<sup>48</sup>

I used to go around ḥadīth-gatherings of different scholars and run till I was out of breath so no-one would precede me. I would start my day having nothing to eat and finish it having nothing to eat. Never did Allāh degrade me to take from another person, instead He provided for me in order to protect my honor. Truth is, mentioning all my experiences would take quite a while.

And here I am now and you can see what I have achieved. I will tell you the whole story in one single sentence, and that is Allāh's saying:

وَأَتَقْوُ اللَّهَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمْ اللَّهُ

Fear Allāh, and Allāh shall teach you.

[*Sūrah al-Baqarah* : 282]

<sup>48</sup> His grandson Abū al-Muẓfir said in (*Mir'āt al-Zamān*, 8/482): 'I heard my uncle say: "Through the two fingers of my hands I was the greatest whip in righting wrong. 100 000 people repented in my hands and 20 000 became Muslim." ' The number 20 had dropped from the print of *Mir'āt al-Zamān* but the checker of *Siyar al-Ā'lam al-Nubulā'*, noticed it (21/370). He also said in (*al-Muntazam*, 10/237): 'I preached in al-Halba in Ramadān and 120 people announced their repentance.' He also said in (*Sa'id al-Khaṭīr*, 41): "All my gatherings are attended by countless people who cry and regret their sins. Most times a group of people would get up to have the hair of their youth cut (which was a habit at that time when announcing repentance). They were often as big as 50 or 100 people and some days their number exceeded 100. Most of them were youth who had grown up playing games and immersing themselves in worldly and sinful matters.' Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Rajab says in (*Thaib Tabaqat al-Hanabila*, 3/410): "We can conclude that his gathering of exhortation had no equal and no-one had heard of anything similar. They were very beneficial sittings where the heedless came to remember, the ignorant came to know, the sinners repented and the polytheists became Muslim."

## CHAPTER FOUR

# Benefiting from Time and Opportunities

**T**AKE HEED, MY SON, for your own benefit, and regret your previous shortcomings. Work hard to attain the company of those who have achieved perfection while you still have time. Water your tree while there is still some moisture left in it, and remember the time you have wasted for that indeed is a sufficient reminder. As time has passed, the delight of laziness has vanished and the levels of virtuous deeds have been missed. Indeed, our pious predecessors loved to enact every virtue and would cry out of missing just one.

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham<sup>49</sup>, may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him, said: “We once went to visit a worshiper who was sick and found him crying, looking at his feet. We asked, ‘Why are you crying?’ to

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<sup>49</sup> The exemplary Imām, the knower and the master of ascetics, Abū Iṣhāq al-‘Ajlī al-Khurasanī al-Bakhī, the resident of Syria (approximately 100-662). Abu Nu‘aym said: ‘I heard Sufyān say: ‘Ibrāhīm ibn Adham resembled Ibrāhīm al-Khalīl. Had he been a Sahabi he would have surely been a virtuous man.’’ His biography can be found in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'* (7/367-8/58), *Tabaqāt al-Auliya'* (5/15), *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'* (7/387), Ibn Athir, *al-Kamil* (6/56), *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah* (10/135-145) and *Shatharāt al-Thahab* (1/255-256).

which he replied, 'They did not become dirty in the path of Allāh.' Another person cried, and they asked: 'Why are you crying?' He answered: 'Due to a day that passed without me fasting it and a night that passed without me standing it.'"

Know, my son, that days consist of hours and hours are made of the breaths you take. Every breath is a treasure chest, so beware of letting a breath pass by with no benefit. You do not want to find an empty treasure chest on the Day of Judgment and regret. Indeed, a man once said to 'Amir ibn 'Abd Qais<sup>50</sup>: "Stop, I want to talk to you", so he said to him: "Hold the sun in your hands [i.e. stop time] so I can talk to you."

Ma'rūf<sup>51</sup>, may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him, said to some

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<sup>50</sup> Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh (and it is said: Abū 'Amr) al-Tamīmī al-'Anbarī 'Amir ibn 'Abd Qais al-Baṣrī. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī described him as: The example, the *walī* and the ascetic. He is one of the eight leading *Tabi'in* in ascetism. Ka'b al-Ahbār once saw him and said: 'This is the devotee of this nation.' Qātada said: 'When 'Amir was on the verge of death he cried.' He was asked: 'Why are you crying?' so he said: 'I am not crying because I fear death or crave this world. It is the thirst of the midday heat and the standing at night that I cry for.' He is said to have died in the time of Mu'awiyah. (Refer to his biography: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Tabaqāt*, 7/103, Aḥmad: *al-Zuhd*, 218, *Hilyatu'l-Auliyyā'*, 2/87, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'*, 4/15, 'Alqama ibn Murthid: *Zuhd al-Thamaniya min al-Tabi'in*, p. 37-40.)

<sup>51</sup> Ma'rūf al-Karkhī Abū Maḥfūz al-Baghdādī, described by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī as: 'The authority of the ascetics, the blessing of our times.' Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī has gathered his virtues in a book that has been printed. He passed away in 200 AH. Imām Aḥmad said that he is a person whose *du'ā* is answered. 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal said: 'I said to my father: 'Did Ma'rūf have any knowledge?' to which he replied: 'My son, he had the basis of all knowledge and that is fear of Allāh.' (Refer to his biography: *Tabaqāt al-Auliyyā'*, 280, 285, *Tabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, 83-90, *Tabaqāt al-Ḥanabila*, 1/381, 389, *Sifāt al-Safwā*, 2/79-83, *Hilyatu'l-Auliyyā'*, 8/360, 368, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'*, 0/339, 345.)

people sitting with him: “Do you not wish to get up? Verily, the angel of the sun is dragging it and does not get weary [i.e. time is passing].”

The Prophet (ﷺ) said in a ḥadīth: “Whoever says: ‘Glory be to Allāh, the Exalted, and all praise is His,’ will have a palm tree planted for him in Paradise due to that”<sup>52</sup> So just think about the number of palm trees you will miss by wasting time!

Our predecessors had the habit of making the most of every single second. Kahmas<sup>53</sup>, for example, used to recite the Qur’ān

<sup>52</sup> Ṣahīḥ: Ibn Abī Shaibah: *al-Musannaf*, 10/290, al-Tirmidhī, 346, al-Nasai: ‘*‘Amal al-Yaum wa al-Layl*, 827, Ibn Ḥibbān, 2335 - *Mawārid*, al-Hakim: *al-Mustadrak ‘alā’l-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, 1/501-502, Abū Ya’la, 2233, from Jabir. Al-Tirmidhī said: ‘A hasan ṣahīḥ gharīb narration.’ Al-Hakim authenticated it according to the conditions of Muslim and al-Dhahabī agreed. It is as they said. The narration has supportive reports from the ḥadīth of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr and Mu’adh ibn Sahl which were mentioned by al-Albānī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 64.

<sup>53</sup> Kahmas ibn al-Ḥaṣan al-Tamīmī, the Hanafite from al-Baṣra, the worshipper Abū al-Ḥaṣan, one of the major figures of the trustworthy. He was a pious worshipper who died in 149. An example of his plentiful worship is that he would pray 1000 units every day, and when he got weary he would say (to his soul): ‘Get up, you abode of all evil, for by Allāh I have never been pleased with you for Allāh.’ (Refer to his biography: *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/174, *Siyar al-‘A’lām al-Nubulā’* 6/316, *Khulasa al-Taibhah al-Kamal*, 322, *Tahtib al-Taibhah*, 5408, *Shatharāt al-Thabab*, 1/225.)

A beneficial note: It has authentically reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he forbade us from completing reading the Qur’ān in less than three days. This can be found in the ḥadīth of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr: “And Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: ‘Complete reading the Qur’ān every month.’ He said: ‘I can bear more than that’ and continued saying that until he said: ‘Complete it every three days.’” (al-Bukhārī, 1978) He also said to ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr: “Read it in

completely three times a day.

Forty of them would pray the morning prayer with the wuḍū of 'Ishā'. [i.e. they would stay up all night praying]<sup>54</sup>

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seven days but not more than that." (al-Bukhārī, 5054, Muslim, 1159, 184). As for the reports that mention how our noble predecessors used to read the Qur'ān in less than three days, we can only comment on that by conveying the words of the Ḥāfiẓ and virtuous critic al-Dhahabī when he related the words of Yahya ibn Aktham in the biography of the famous Imam al-Waki' ibn al-Jarrah (al-Siyar, 9/143): "I accompanied Waki' as a resident and a traveler and found him fasting all the time and completing the Qur'ān every day." Al-Dhahabi said: "I say: 'This is very impressive worship but it is not ideal, coming from someone comparable to the Imams of Athariyya. This is because the Prophet (ﷺ) has authentically been reported to have forbidden us from continuous fasting and completing the Qur'ān in less than three days. The religion of Islam is ease and following the Sunnah come first. May Allāh be pleased with Waki', and where in any case is someone like him?'" I say: May Allāh have mercy on al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī for he was indeed a brilliant critic and deserved to be called the Imam of fair critics. May Allāh have mercy on this Imam and gather us all with the people of ḥadīth. God knows I love him a lot for His sake.

<sup>54</sup> May Allāh have mercy on Ibn al-Jawzī who said (*al-Yawaqit al-Jawzīyya*, p. 28-29): "How excellent are the people who have abandoned sweet dreams, withdrawing from that for which they erected their feet for. Standing up to fatigue themselves in the dark, seeking a portion of the blessing. When the night comes they stay up, and when the day arrives they derive lessons from it. When they look at their faults they seek forgiveness, and when they think about their sins they cry and feel dejected. O dwellings of the beloved, where are your inhabitants? O places of sincerity, where are your residents? O spots of the pious, where are your people? O places of nightly prayer, where are your visitors? I have, by Allāh, traveled around and found these people extinct. Those who used to stay awake at night have gone away and the lovers of sleep are left. These times have sought eating of lusts to replace fasting."

Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya<sup>55</sup> used to pray the whole night, and when

<sup>55</sup> Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya, Umm al-Khair bint Isma'il, the pious, covered, ascetic and God fearing worshipper from Basra. She is said to have lived for 80 years and died in 180 AH. The narration was related by al-Hāfiẓ al-Dhahabī by way of Ibn Abī al-Dunya: We were told by Muḥammad ibn al-Husayn, I was told by ʻIsā ibn Maymun al-Attār, I was told by ʻAbda bint Abī Shawwāl who used to serve Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya: 'Rābi'a used to pray the whole night. When morning would come she would lay down till the sky would turn to yellow. I used to hear her say: 'My soul, how much do you sleep and till what time do you stand up? You might sleep for just a little and never get up until the Day of Resurrection.' al-Hāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muṭbīsh*, p. 211: 'Rābi'a the worshipper used to get up to pray in the beginning of the night and say:

The lover has stood up for her hope  
And her heart is about to fly away from joy

When the night was over she would say: "No! It has been taken away!" and recite:

The darkness is gone with its intimacy and concord  
If only the night and its intimacy would come again

An important note: Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya is a pious woman of worship and asceticism who has been mistreated by the people. Some accused her of believing in ḥulūl, and Allah's refuge is sought, some claimed she held the belief of Ibāḥa and others denied that she had ever existed. All of this is wrong and unjust as great Imāms like Sufyān al-Thawrī and Shu'ba have related things that render all these accusations false. Al-Hāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said (*Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 232/243): 'Abū Sa'īd ibn al-'Arabī said: 'As for Rābi'a, people have learned much wisdom from her. Sufyān, Shu'ba and others have related things about her that render the things said about her futile. What she was accused of was derived from the following words she had said:

I have indeed put you in the heart to speak to me  
And have permitted my body to whoever wants to sit with me

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dawn came she lay down for a bit and then got up frightened, saying to herself: “Sleep in the grave is long.”

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Some said she believes in ḥulūl based on the first line and that she believes in Ibāḥa based on the second.’ I (al-Dhahabī) say: This is exaggeration and ignorance. It may very well be that the person who said this is himself a person who believes in these things and wanted to use this poetry to support his disbelief just like they used the ḥadīth: ‘I will be the hearing that he hears with.’ I say: From the shameful traits of today’s Hululite Ṣūfis is their attempts to support their evidently deviant beliefs by forged and contradictory poetry and made up stories attributed to her. May Allāh give us refuge and not forsake us! They have even authored a book about these things and mentioned things about her life that give goose bumps to any monotheistic Sunni Muslim. Even more ridiculous than this group of people are those who made a film about her, portraying her as a dancer in the early parts of her life and other such falsehood to drive people from their religion. May Allāh misguide and humiliate them with this despicable and shameless discipline of theirs that keeps twisting realities. As for those who say she never existed, we ask them to think a bit about the sources of her biographies. They are all related by the great Imams of this discipline such as al-Dhahabī (*Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 8/242, *al-'Ibar*, 1/278), Ibn Khalakān (*Wafayāt al-Ā'yān*, 3/215), Ibn al-'Imād (*Shatharāt al-Dhabab*, 1/193), Ibn Kathīr (*al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 10/186), al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (*Tārikh Baghdād*, 2/40) and Ibn al-Jawzī (*Sifat al-Ṣafwa*, 4/17-19). Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī even dedicated a book for her virtues as mentioned by al-Dhahabī (*Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 8/242) and also named his oldest daughter and mother of his grandson Abū al-Muzfir (the author of *Mir'āt al-Zamān*) Rabi'a. You can also see how he mentions occasions from her life in most of his books exhortation.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# What Can This Eternal Life be Bought With?

WHEN A PERSON THINKS about the life of this world before entering it, he considers it long. Likewise, when he thinks about it after leaving it, he sees a long period of time and knows that the stay in the grave is long. When he thinks about the Day of Judgment, he knows that its fifty thousand years long, and when he thinks about Paradise and Hell, he knows that they will never end. Now, when he goes back to look at the time spent in this world, lets say 60 years<sup>56</sup>, he can see that

<sup>56</sup> Abū Hurayrah (*radiy Allāhu 'anhu*) has been reported to have said: "Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: 'The lifespans of my nation are between 60 and 70. The minority will live beyond that.'" (al-Tirmidhī, 3550, Ibn Mājah, 4236, Ibn Hibbān, #2467- *Mawārid*, al-Hākim: *al-Mustadrak 'alā'l-Šabihayn*, 2/427) Al-Tirmidhī said: '*Hasan gharib*.' Al-Hākim said: '*Šahīh* by the conditions of Muslim.' Al-Dhahabī agreed. Al-Ḥafiz ibn Hajar said (*Fath al-Bārī*, 11/240): 'Its chain is *ḥasan*.' Truth is that this ḥadīth is *ḥasan li dhātihī sabiḥ li ghayrihi* due to another route with a *ḥasan* chain as well with al-Tirmidhī (2331) who said: '*Hasan gharib*.' A wise man said: 'Man's age consists of four phases: childhood, youth, maturity and old age which is the last of them and usually occurs between the age of 60 and 70. During this time a man becomes evidently weak by deficiency and becomes

thirty of it is spent sleeping, fifteen or so is spent in childhood and most of what's left goes to chasing after desires, food and money. When he accounts for what is left, he finds that much of it is nothing but showing off and heedlessness. The price of eternal life is the hours of his life, but what is left of them for him to buy it with?!

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ing geriatric, and he should seriously dedicate all his time for the afterlife as being the energetic and strong man he used to be isn't possible anymore.' Al-Hāfiẓ mentioned this (*al-Fath*, 11/240). I say: Think about the Prophet's (ﷺ) words: "May Allāh pardon a man whose death He has delayed till the age of 60." (*al-Bukhārī*, 6419, a marfū' report from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radiy Allāhu 'anhu*).

## CHAPTER SIX

### Awakening After Heedlessness

MY SON, DO NOT LET YOUR PAST carelessness make you lose hope of achieving good, for many people have come back to wakefulness after long sleep. Shaikh Abū Ḥākim<sup>57</sup>, may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him, told me what follows: ‘When I was a child, I spent my time in idle play and did not pay attention to Sacred Knowledge. Then my father Abū ‘Abdullāh, Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him, wanted to talk to me and said: ‘My son, I will not be here for you forever, so take twenty dinārs, open a bread shop and make some money.’

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<sup>57</sup> The great exemplary scholar Abū Ḥākim Ibrāhīm ibn Dīnār al-Nahruwānī al-Ḥanbālī, one of the Imams of Baghdad, a godly ascetic, who was benevolent and forbearing. He was one of the greatest scholars in the field of inheritance. He established a school by Bab al-Azaj and in which he remained, worshipping Allāh. He preferred to be unknown, and was always content with his condition. He used to earn his bread as a tailor, taking only two coins for a garment. Some individuals attempted to anger him but to no avail, and he would serve the disabled and elderly with a joyful face. His hearing of ḥadīth was correct. He passed away in 556. (al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī: *Siyar al-Ā’lām al-Nubulā’*, 20/396. For his biography, refer to: Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntaṣam*, 10/201, 202, *Thaīl Tabaqāt al-Ḥanabila*, 1/231-241, *Shātharāt al-Thahab*, 4/176, *al-Bidāyah wa’l-Nihāyah*, 12/245)

I said: 'What are you saying?' So he said: 'Open a cloth shop then.' I said: 'How can you say this to me when I'm the son of the judge of judges 'Abdullāh al-Dāmaghānī'<sup>58</sup>?' He replied: 'But I do not see you seeking knowledge.' I said: 'Give me a lecture right now.' He did so and I came forward to busy myself with knowledge. From thereon, I began taking the studying of Sacred Knowledge seriously so Allāh gave me success in that."

A colleague of Abū Muḥammad al-Halāwanī,<sup>59</sup> may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him, told me the following: 'My father died when I was 21 and at that time I was known for being idle. When I went to claim a house I had inherited from its inhabitants, I heard them say: the Mudbir, i.e. *al-Rabit* [he who abandoned the adornment of life] has arrived.' Having heard this, I said to my-

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<sup>58</sup> The profound scholar, the mufti of 'Iraq, the judge of judges, Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Hasan ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Husawayhi al-Dāmaghānī al-Hanāfi (Dāmaghānī refers to somebody from Dāmaghān which is a big city between al-Rayy and Naisabur). Al-Dhahabi said: "He was a person of nobility and great decency and has been compared to judge Abū Yusuf in his times. Among his children were Imams and judges." He died in 478 and his son, the judge of judges Abū al-Hasan led his funeral prayer. For his biography, refer to: *Tārikh Baghdād*, 3/109, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 12/129, *Shātharāt al-Thahab*, 3/362, *al-Fawā'id al-Bahiyah*, 182-183, *al-Kāmil*, 10/146, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'*, 18/485, *al-'Ibar*, 3/292.

<sup>59</sup> The jurist 'Abdu'l-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Halāwanī, the jurist and Imam Abu Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Fath. Al-Munthiri said: "He was a Hanbali scholar and was versed in jurisprudence, Qur'ānic exegesis and ḥadīth." Ibn Rajab said: "I saw something that was written in his handwriting which indicates that he has authored a major commentary on the differed upon issues. He has also written a 41 volume commentary on the Qur'ān which he has talked about." For his biography, refer to: Ibn Rajab: *Thālib Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/221.

self: 'Is this what they say about me?' I went to my mother and told her: You will find me in the masjid of Shaikh Abū al-Khaṭṭāb<sup>60</sup> if you need me.' I accompanied him and did not leave except for delivering judgments. I then became a judge for a period of time." I say: "I saw him delivering legal verdicts and debating."

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<sup>60</sup> The Shaikh, Imām and great God fearing scholar of the Ḥanbalites, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Maḥfūẓ ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan al-‘Irāqī al-Kalwadhanī at first, then al-Baghdādī later on (d. 510 AH). Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said: 'Abū al-Khaṭṭāb was a fine scholar. He was benevolent, truthful, well mannered and spoke extraordinarily eloquent arabic. He was a smart man who narrated many ḥadīths and studied and recorded ḥadīth as well.' Ibn Rajab said (*al-Thail*, 1/120): 'Abū al-Khaṭṭāb was a great jurist who used to focus much on verification of matters. He has checked and investigated numerous matters of jurisprudence and legal theory and differs with the majority view of the Hanbalites in some issues.' After this he went on to mention many examples of that. For his biography, refer to: *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 19/348, Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntaẓam*, 9/190-193, *al-Kāmil*, 10/524, *al-Ibar*, 4/21, *Mir’āt al-Zamān*, 8/41-42, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 12/180, *Thail Tabaqāt al-Ḥanabila*, 1/116-127, *Shatharāt al-Thabab*, 4/27-28.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# Methodology of Cultivation by Day and Night

MY SON, MAKE IT BINDING on yourself to get up at the beginning of Fajr, and do not converse about worldly matters. Our pious predecessors never talk about a worldly matter at that time at all.<sup>61</sup> When you wake up, say: “Praise be to Allah who gave me life after having caused me

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<sup>61</sup> This was the way they used to do things back then. Hassān ibn ‘Atiyya, one of the trustworthy Tābi‘īs, would pray ‘Aṣr and sit in the masjid, remembering Allāh till sunset (*Siyar al-Ā‘lām al-Nubulā*, 5/467). Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Qayyim, the dutiful student of Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, says about his teacher (*al-Wābil al-Sayyib*, 39-40): “I was with him once when he prayed Fajr. After praying he remained seated, remembering Allāh, Most High, till it was almost midday. Then he looked at me and said: ‘This is my lunch, and if I do not nourish myself with lunch I will become weak.’” I say: One of the most important things a Muslim should do after the Fajr prayer is to turn completely to Allāh by remembering Him and reciting in the forenoon the words of remembrance established by the Sacred Law. He should make this remembrance a continuous habit and never leave it. Later on he can add other virtuous remembrance or Qur’ānic recital to this until sunrise. Refer to: Ibn al-Qayyim, *Tariq al-Hijratain*, p. 271, 272, and our booklet *Adkhār al-Sabāhī wa al-Masā’*.

to die, and He shall resurrect us.”<sup>62</sup> and “Praise be to Allāh who holds the sky from falling on the earth except by His permission. Allāh is truly benevolent and merciful to the people.”<sup>63</sup>

Then get up to purify yourself and pray the Sunnah of Fajr<sup>64</sup>, then go to the Masjid in a humble attitude and on your way say: “O Allāh! I ask You by the right that those asking have upon You and by the right of this walking of mine. I did not leave [my home] in arrogance and pride, nor to be seen or heard. I only left out of fearing Your anger and seeking Your pleasure. I ask You to pro-

<sup>62</sup> Al-Bukhārī: *Kitāb al-Da'wāt*, Chapter: “What should be said before sleep” (#6312) from the ḥadīth of Hudhaifah, *Kitāb al-Da'wāt*, Chapter: “What should be said after waking up in the morning” (6325) from the ḥadīth of Abū Dharr, Muslim: *Kitāb al-Dhikr wa'l-Du'ā*, Chapter: “What should be said when going to sleep and laying down on the bed” (2713), (59), from the ḥadīth of al-Barā'a ibn 'Āzib. Al-Ḥāfiẓ said (*al-Faṭh*, 11/114): “And He will resurrect us”: Meaning: He will bring us back to life on the Day of Judgement. The Arabs say: ‘Allāh *nashara* the dead’ meaning, ‘He gave them life and they lived.’”

<sup>63</sup> Abū Ya'la: *al-Muṣnād*, 1791, al-Nasā'i: *'Amal al-Yaum wa al-Laila*, 853- 854, Ibn al-Sinnī, 12, Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 2362- *Mawārid*, al-Ḥākim, 1/548. All of them are *marfu'* *mutawwāl* narrations through the chain of Abū al-Zubayr who narrated from Jābir. After attributing it to Abū Ya'la, al-Haythamī said (*al-Majma'* *al-Zawā'id*, 10/120): ‘It narrators are narrators of *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* with the exception of Ibrāhīm ibn al-Hajjāj al-Shamī who is trustworthy.’ Al-Munthirī said (*al-Targhib*, 1/416): ‘Related by Abū Ya'la with a *ṣaḥīḥ* chain.’ Al-Ḥākim hold that the ḥadīth is sahīh by the conditions of Muslim and al-Dhahabī agrees. Al-Ḥāfiẓ said (*Natā'ij al-Afkār*, p. 198): ‘A *hasan gharib* narration.’

<sup>64</sup> 'Ā'ishah has been reported to have said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) did not take care of any voluntary act of worship the way he took care of the two prayer units of Fajr.” (al-Bukhārī, 1169, Muslim, 724, 94 (repeated). It has also been reported from 'Ā'ishah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The two prayer units of Fajr are better than this world and all that it contains.” (Muslim, 725, 96) In another report of his (725, 97): “They are more beloved to me than the whole world.”

tect me from the Fire and forgive me my sins. Truly, none forgives sins but You.”<sup>65</sup>

Join the Ṣalāh on the right side of the Imām<sup>66</sup> and when you have finished the Ṣalāh, say the following ten times: “There is no deity worthy of worship but Allāh alone without partners. His is all Kingship and His is all praise. He gives life and causes death.

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<sup>65</sup> A weak ḥadīth: Ahmad, 3/21, Ibn Mājah, 778, Ibn al-Sinnī, 83. Al-Busayrī said (*al-Zawā’id*): ‘Its chain has a continuous chain of weak narrators.’ The ḥadīth was also declared weak by al-Munthirī (*al-Targhib*) and Shaikh al-Islām (*al-Tawassul wa al-Wasila*). Refer also to: al-Albānī: *al-Tawassul*, p. 93-99, and *Silsilah Aḥādīth al-Da’īfah*, 24, where he has done a good job in clarifying the hidden defects of this ḥadīth. This narration can be replaced by what has been related by Muslim (763, 191) from the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Abbās that mentions how he stayed the night in the house of his aunt Maymuna. In this narration he talks about the nightly prayer of the Prophet (ﷺ) and says: “The Mu’adhin announced the call for prayer - that is, the morning prayer - so he left to the prayer, saying: ‘O Allāh, put light in my heart and light on my tongue. Put light in my hearing and light in my sight. Put light behind me and light in front of me. Put light above me and light beneath me. O Allāh, give me light.’”

<sup>66</sup> Imām al-Bukhārī placed a chapter heading in *Kitāb al-Adbān* of his *al-Saḥīḥ* (79) called: “*The right side of the masjid and the Imām*”. Al-Ḥāfiẓ said (*al-Fath*, 2/ 213): “It is as if he is pointing here to what al-Nasā’i related with a sahīh chain from al-Barā’ā who said: ‘We used to like being on the right side of the Prophet (ﷺ) when we were praying behind him.’” Abū Dāwūd also related a *marfū’ ḥasan* narration from ‘Ā’ishah: ‘Allāh sends praises on the right side of the rows and His angels pray for them.’ I say: Many people have abandoned these Prophetic traditions and virtues to the extent that I have seen with my own eyes how some of our brethren actually prefer the left side over the right side because the left one has air conditioners on it. Exalted is Allāh above the actions of those who waste the abundant good contained in Allāh’s praise for him in the highest gathering and the seeking of forgiveness of the angels for him.

In His hand is all good and He is capable of anything.”<sup>67</sup>

After that, say *subhanAllāh* ten times, *alhamdulillāh* ten times and *Allāhu akbar* ten times.<sup>68</sup> Then recite the verse of the Footstool<sup>69</sup> and ask Allāh, Glorious is He, to accept your Ṣalāh. Then, remain seated and remember Allāh, Most High, till the sun has risen. Then, pray what Allāh has written for you and If you can per-

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<sup>67</sup> A ṣahīh narration: Ahmād, 5/415, from Abū Ayyub al-Anṣārī. Al-Albānī authenticated it due to its many chains and supportive narrations. Refer to: *Ṣabīḥ al-Targhib wa'l-Tarhib*, 656, *Silsilah Ḥaḍīth al-Ṣabīḥah*, 113-114.

<sup>68</sup> A ṣahīh narration: Abū Dāwūd, 5065, al-Tirmidhī, 3407, al-Nasā'i, 3/74, from 'Abdullāh ibn 'Amr. Its chain was authenticated by al-Nawawī (*al-Āthkār*, p. 142) and al-Ḥāfiẓ (*al-Futuḥat al-Rabbaniyya*, 1/51).

<sup>69</sup> A ṣahīh narration: Ibn al-Sinnī, 12, from Muḥammad ibn Ḥumair from Muḥammad ibn Ziyād al-Alhānī from Abū Umāmah as marfū' with the wording: 'Whoever reads the verse of the Footstool after every prayer, then nothing stands between him and Paradise except death.' Al-Munthirī said (*al-Targhib*, 2/ 261): 'Related by al-Nasā'i and al-Ṭabarānī with chains of which one is ṣahīh. Our Shaikh Abū al-Ḥasan said it corresponds to the conditions of al-Bukhārī and Ibn Ḥibbān in *Kitāb al-Ṣalāh* and authenticated it. Al-Ṭabarānī added from some of its routes: {Qul huwa Allāhu ḥaḍ} Its chain with this addition is good as well.' Al-Haithamī said (*al-Majma' al-Zawā'id*, 10/102): 'Related by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* and *al-Ausat* with different chains, one of them being good.' The ḥadīth can be found with: al-Nasā'i: *'Amal al-Yaum wa al-Laila*, 100. It has a supportive narration in the ḥadīth of al-Mughira ibn Shu'ba which was related by Abū Nu'aym (*al-Hilyatul-Awliyā'*, 3/121) with a *hasan* chain. Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī erroneously included this ḥadīth in his *al-Mawdū'āt*. For more details on the ḥadīth, refer to: *Zādū'l-Ma'ād*, 1/303, 304, al-Shawkanī: *Tuhfāt al-Dbakirin*, p. 117, al-Albānī: *Silsilah Ḥaḍīth al-Ṣabīḥah*, 972. A beneficial note: Shaikh al-Islām Ibn al-Qayyim said (*Zādū'l-Ma'ād*, 1/204): 'I have heard that our Shaikh Abu al-'Abbas Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allāh give reverence to his spirit, said: 'I have not left it right after every prayer.'"

form eight units, that is good.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> This is based on the ḥadīth of Ummu Hani' Fakhita bint Abī Ṭalib where she says: "I went to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) in the year of conquest and found him taking a bath. After finishing he prayed eight units and this was at forenoon." (al-Bukhārī, 1176, Muslim, 336, 82) A narration of Muslim says (336, 71): "Then he prayed eight units of the forenoon voluntary prayer." Al-Nawawī said (*Sharḥ Saḥīb Muslim*, 4, 29): "This wording contains a delicate benefit and that is the units of the forenoon prayer are eight in number. The proof is derived from her words: 'the forenoon voluntary prayer' which clearly indicate that this is an established and known Sunnah which is not evident in the narration that says: 'he prayed eight units and this was at forenoon.'"

A beneficial note: The forenoon prayer (*Salāt al-Duḥa*) is the prayer of the *Awwabin* i.e. those who are coming to their senses after heedlessness and those who are returning from sinning to repentance. It is ideally performed as eight prayer units and on a normal level as four or six. It is best to perform it at the hottest time of the day and at the rising of forenoon. Generally it can be performed at any time between sunrise and midday. Refer to: Ibn al-Qayyim: *Zād al-Ma'ād*, 1/341, 360.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# Sacred Knowledge Supersedes all Voluntary Actions

ONCE YOU HAVE REVIEWED YOUR lesson till forenoon, pray eight units of Ṣalāt al-Duḥā [the forenoon prayer]. Then keep yourself busy with reading or copying texts till 'Aṣr time. After 'Aṣr, return to your studies until Maghrib time.<sup>71</sup> After [praying] Maghrib, pray two units, reading two Juz' of Qur'ān in them, and study again after praying the

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<sup>71</sup> It should be noted, may Allāh have mercy on us all, that the specified times and methods of voluntary worship (*aurad*) vary from person to person whether they are related to invocation, remembrance, reading the Qur'ān, beneficial knowledge or seeking forgiveness at night or day. Ibn Qudama says (*Mukhtasar Minhāj al-Qāsidīn*, p. 82): "The traveler on the path to Afterlife is one of six: 1. a worshiper, 2. a scholar, 3. a student, 4. a man of responsibility, 5. a laborer, or 6. someone who has immersed himself in his love for Allāh and spends all his time in that." After this the author began clarifying and arranging the preferred actions for each depending on their varying conditions. The things he mentioned are very important so do refer to it. As for Ibn al-Jawzī's advice here, it should be known that it is directed towards a student of Sacred Knowledge who is able to dedicate all of his time for his studies with nothing to hold him back. And Allāh knows best.

Ṣalāh of ‘Isha’.<sup>72</sup> Then lay down on your right side,<sup>73</sup> say *subhanAllāh* thirty three times, *alhamdulillāh* thirty three times and *Allāhu akbar* thirty four times.<sup>74</sup> Say: “O Allah! Protect me from Your punishment on the day You shall gather Your slaves.”<sup>75</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī said (*al-Hazzu ‘ala Ḥifz al-Ilm wa Dhikru Kibār al-Huffāz*, p. 35): “How to master what you memorise (the text says *Aḥkam*, but it seems to mean *Ihkam* instead): The secret behind mastering what you memorise is lots of repetition, and people are different in that: With some the information sticks with just a little amount of repetition and others need to repeat it many times. Therefore, a man should repeat his lessons in order to have it firmly established in his memory. The Prophet (ﷺ) has said: “Take good care of the Qur’ān for it escapes the chests of men quicker than a precious camel from its leash.” I say: This ḥadīth is agreed upon: al-Bukhārī, 5033, Muslim, 791, 231, from Abū Hurairah.

<sup>73</sup> Refer to: *Zād al-Ma‘ād*, 4/239: “His preparations for sleep and wakefulness.” Also, it was related (al-Bukhārī, 6315, Muslim, 2710, 56) from the ḥadīth of al-Barā’ ibn ‘Āzib that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “When you come to your resting place, perform the wudu you’d perform for praying. Then lay down on your right side and say: ‘O Allāh, I have submitted myself to You, turned my face to You, entrusted my affair to You and put my trust in You having my back. I have done this out of my desire to arrive to You and out of my fear of You. No shelter is there from You and no savior except You. I have believed in Your Book which You have revealed and Your prophet whom you have sent.’ Make these your final words. If you die on that night you will die on your *fitrah* (natural disposition)”.

<sup>74</sup> Based on the ḥadīth (al-Bukhārī, 6318, Muslim, 2727) from ‘Alī where Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said to Fāṭima: “When you go to sleep, say *Allāhu akbar* 33 times, *subhanAllāh* 33 times and *alhamdulillāh* 33 times.” Another narration says: “*subhanAllāh* is 34 times” and another one says: “*Allāhu akbar* is 34 times.” ‘Alī said: “I have not left it ever since I heard it from Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ).” He was asked: “Not even on the night of *Sīfīn* (a war)?” to which he replied: “Not even on the night of *Sīfīn*.”

<sup>75</sup> Sahih: Abū Dāwūd, 5045, Ibn al-Sinnī, 7337, al-Nasā’i: *‘Amal al-Yaumi wa al-Laila*, 452, al-Tabarānī: *al-Mu’jām al-Kabir*, 394, from Hafsah, the mother of the believers, where he told that whenever Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) wanted to sleep=

When you open your eyes after sleep, know that your soul has now taken its share.<sup>76</sup> Get up, perform ablution and pray what you can in the darkness of the night. Open your prayer with two light units, and follow them with two units, reciting two Juz' from the Qur'ān in them. After that, start your studies, as Sacred Knowledge is better than all voluntary actions.<sup>77</sup>

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= he put his right hand under his cheek and said: "Allāh, protect me from Your punishment on the day You shall resurrect your slaves" three times. This narration was declared ḥasan by al-Ḥāfiẓ (*Natā'ij al-Aṣkār*, p. 193). It has supportive narrations from al-Barā', Hudhaifah and Ibn Mas'ūd which raise it to the level of ṣahīḥ, and Allāh knows best.

<sup>76</sup> As for his guidance while being awake, he used to wake up when the rooster crowed, praising Allāh Most High, saying *Allāhu akbar* and *lā ilaha illallāh* and calling to Him. After that he would use the tooth stick (*miswak*), get up for ablution and stand in front of His Lord in prayer, conversing with Him through His speech, praising and hoping, desiring and fearing. Is there really anything better than this in preserving the health of one's body and heart, spirit and strength and the enjoyment of this world and the hereafter? Refer to: *Zad al-Ma'ād*, 4/246.

<sup>77</sup> This has been mentioned by many Imāms such as al-Zuhrī, Sufyān al-Thaurī, Abū Ḥanīfah and al-Shāfi'i. You should refer to Ibn Rajab's explanation of Abū al-Darda's ḥadīth (p. 96, 103) as he has analyzed this issue in it in academic and fair fashion. Every student should understand his words and follow them. He said: "The scholars have differed concerning this issue: Which one is better, studying Sacred Knowledge or performing voluntary prayers and reciting the Qur'ān and words of remembrance? Knowledge is better for him who studies sincerely for Allāh's sake and has a good and clear mind. However, this should still be joined with a good amount of prayers and worship. If you find him to be a serious student but notice that he's lacking in his worship, it is a lazy and worthless person you're dealing with, and this person is not truthful when he says his intentions are good. As for when one studies ḥadīth and fiqh simply as an intellectual pursuit, worship is better in such a case. In fact, the difference between the two is like the difference between the normative and superlative. This is a general categorization, and by Allāh, I've have only seen a few who are sincere in seeking this knowledge."

## CHAPTER NINE

# Beware of Pitfalls and Obstacles

**P**RACTICE ISOLATION for it is the basis of all good,<sup>78</sup> and beware of bad companionship, and let the books and reading about the lives of our predecessors be your companions.

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<sup>78</sup> Al-Imām al-Bukhārī has a chapter in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* called: “Isolation is a rest from mixing with bad people.” You should know that the differing of scholars here concerns the superiority of marriage and being single and that it depends on the person and his condition. One of the most important things one should pay attention to here is that an ignorant person isolating himself only harms him. A scholar was once asked: “What do you say about the isolation of an ignorant person?” and he replied: “Insane calamity.” He was then asked: “What about that of a learned one?” He said: “Why do you wish for it? Leave it, for it has its feet and water reservoir. It will drink water and eat the trees till its Lord meets it.” Al-Imām al-Khattabi has authored a great book on isolation and abridged the truth about this issue in the end (p. 117-118), saying: “The ideal here is that a person does not neglect any duties he may have towards others even if they don't ask him to perform them, and that he does not get involved in falsehood that is not binding on him even if they invite him. Indeed, whoever gets occupied with what does not concern him will miss out on what does concern him, and whoever gets busy with falsehood will become apathetic with truth. So be with the people in good and stay away from their evil, and aim to be a witness who is like he wasn't there and a learned man who is like an ignoramus.”

Do not delve into a science before mastering what comes before it. Read how the most complete of us used to seek knowledge and act accordingly, and do not be pleased with less than that. The poet has said:

In faults of men I have not seen anything  
Like the shortcoming of the able in achieving completeness

Know also, that Sacred Knowledge raises the status of the lowly. Indeed, many scholars used to be unknown and unappreciated before becoming scholars. ‘Aṭā ibn Abū Rabāḥ,<sup>79</sup> for example, was black and not pleasant looking. Sulaimān ibn ‘Abd al-Mālik,<sup>80</sup> who was the caliph at that time, came to him with his two sons

<sup>79</sup> ‘Aṭā ibn Abū Rabāḥ Aslam. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said: “The Imam, Shaikh al-Islam and the Mufti of Haram, Abū Muḥammad al-Qurashi, their freed slave from Makkah. His loyalty is said to have been for people of Jumah. He was raised with al-Janad and grew up in Makkah. He was born during the caliphate of ‘Uthmān.’ ‘Aṭā was black, one eyed, snub-nosed, lame and limping and finally became blind as well. He was a trustworthy narrator, a jurist, a scholar, a narrator of many ḥadīths and was the most knowledgeable concerning the rules of pilgrimage. Refer to his biography: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Tabaqāt*, 5/467, *Tahthib al-Kamal*, 938, *al-Ibar*, 1/141, *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā'*, 5/78, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 9/306, *al-‘Aqd al-Thamīn*, 6/84, *Shātharāt al-Thahab*, 1/147. The narration was related by: al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī: *al-Faqīh wa al-Mutafaqqib*, 1/31, who made this chapter heading regarding it: “*Those who rose from being slaves to sitting in the gatherings of the kings.*”

<sup>80</sup> Sulaimān ibn ‘Abd al-Mālik ibn Marwān ibn al-Hakam ibn Abī al-‘As ibn Umayya, the caliph, Abū Ayyub al-Qurashī al-Umawī. He was pledged allegiance to in 69 after his brother al-Walid, and he passed away in 99. His caliphate lasted for two years, nine months and twenty days. Ibn Sīrīn said: “Allāh have mercy on Sulaiman. He started his caliphate by reviving the prayer and finished it by appointing ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz as his successor.” For his biography, refer to: al-Tabārī: *al-Tārīkh*, 6/546, Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Kāmil*, 5/37, *Wāṣīyat al-Āyān*, 2/460, 467, *al-Ibar*, 1/115, 118, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 9/183, *Shātharāt al-Thahab*, 1/116, *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā'*, 5/111.

and asked him about the rites of pilgrimage. He answered whilst turning his face away from them. The caliph said to his sons: “Get up and do not be indolent or lazy in seeking knowledge, as I shall never forget this humiliation in front of this black slave.”

Al-Hasan,<sup>81</sup> Ibn Sirīn,<sup>82</sup> Makhūl<sup>83</sup> and others were slaves as well, but were still given honor and attained high status through knowledge and fear of God.

<sup>81</sup> Al-Hasan ibn Abī al-Hasan Yasar al-Baṣrī Abū Sa‘īd, the freed slave of Zaid ibn Thābit, the example of ascetic scholars and one of the great characters of the Tabī‘īn. He died in 110. Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī said: “Had you seen him you would have said that you have never sat with a scholar of jurisprudence.” Abu Ja‘far al-Bāqir said: ‘That is the person whose speech resembles that of the Prophets.’ Refer to his biography: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Tabaqāt*, 7/156, *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 2/131, Aḥmad: *al-Zuhd*, 2/225, *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 4/563, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/66. Ibn al-Jawzī has dedicated a book for the life and virtues of this Imam which is printed and available.

<sup>82</sup> Muḥammad ibn Sirīn, the Imām and Shaikh al-Islām, Abū Bakr al-Anṣārī al-Anāsī al-Baṣrī, the freed slave of Anas ibn Mālik, the companion and servant of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). He died in 110. Abū ‘Uwana said: ‘I saw Muḥammad ibn Sirīn in the marketplace, and nobody saw him without him mentioning Allāh.’ For his biography, refer to: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Tabaqāt*, 7/193, *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 2/263, *Tārikh Baghdād*, 5/331, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/73, *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 4/606, *al-'Ibar*, 1/135, *Mirāt al-Janān*, 1/232, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 9/267, *Shatharāt al-Thabab*, 1/138.

<sup>83</sup> Makhūl: the scholar of Syria. His name is Makhūl ibn Abī Muslim Shahrab ibn Shathil ibn Sind ibn Shirwan ibn Yazdak ibn Yaghuth ibn Kisra. He was taken prisoner in Kabul but his master’s identity is disputed over, but the most correct of opinions is that he was the slave of a Huthali woman. He was from the middle of the Tabī‘īn and died in 112, 113, or 114. Abū Ḥātim said: ‘Nobody in Syria is as knowledgeable in jurisprudence as Makhūl.’ For his biography, refer to: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Tabaqāt*, 7/453, *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 5/177, *Tabthib al-Asmā'i wa al-Lughāt*, 2/113, 114, *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 5/155, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/107, *al-'Ibar*, 1/140, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 9/305, *Husn al-Muhadara*, 1/119.

## CHAPTER TEN

### Self Sufficiency

MY SON, STRIVE HARD TO PROTECT your honor from running after this world and having to lower yourself to its people. Be content and you shall live honorably.<sup>84</sup> A saying goes: ‘Whoever is content with bread and vegetables will not be subjugated by anyone.’ A Bedouin once passed by Basra and said: ‘Who is the Master of this city?’ It was said to him: ‘Al-Hasan al-Baṣrī.’ He said: ‘And how did he become their master?’ They said: “He had no need of their worldly effects but they were in need of his knowledge”.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbālī said in his explanation of Abū al-Dardā’s ḥadīth (p. 150-152): “He who spreads his knowledge to the people and speaks to them must be very careful of not asking things from them. He must not be covetous for any of their wealth or provisions nor wish to win their hearts. He should just spread his knowledge and be content with not hoping anything from them through careful godliness. This is because greed of worldly matters and yearning them are ugly traits especially when found in a scholar.”

<sup>85</sup> Ibn Rajab related this story while explaining the ḥadīth of Abū al-Dardā: ‘Whoever takes a path that he shall seek knowledge on... (p. 154)’ May Allāh have mercy on al-Hasan who said: “Everything has something staining it, and

Know, my son, that my father was a rich man who left wealth worth thousands behind him. When I reached puberty, I was given twenty dinars and two houses and I was told it was all he had left. I took the dinars and bought books of Sacred Knowledge with them. I sold the houses and spent the money in my pursuit of knowledge. Nothing remained of the wealth I had inherited.<sup>86</sup> Your father has never humiliated himself in his quest for knowledge nor has he gone around cities like other preachers have. He has never sent a note asking something from others and all his affairs are running smoothly:

وَمَنْ

يَتَّقِيَ اللَّهُ يَجْعَلُ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۝ وَرِزْقًا مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ

For him who fears Allāh, He shall make a way out and provide for Him from places he could not expect.

[*Sūrah at-Talāq* : 2-3]

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the stain of Sacred Knowledge is covetousness.” How excellent are the words of al-Imam al-Khaṭṭābī about al-Hasan al-Baṣrī (*al-‘Uz̄lā*, p. 235): “Who will do the job today like al-Hasan with his sincerity of advice and moving admonishment? May Allāh rectify us and our rulers, for they are corrupt because of our sins.”

<sup>86</sup> Al-Khaṭṭāb related from al-Shāfi‘ī with a ḥaṣīḥ chain (*al-Faqīhū wa al-Muṭaṣaqqīh*, 2/94): ‘A student of Sacred Knowledge needs three qualities: long life, free hands, and intelligence.’ Al-Khaṭṭāb al-Baghdādī said: ‘What he means with long life is continuous dedication to knowledge. What he intends with free hands is that the students does not busy himself with a profession to earn money. If he makes himself content with what he has, he will not need most of these earnings. If Allāh Most High has given him intelligence, it is a sign of his happiness and quick achievement of his objectives.’

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

# True Fear of Allāh Results in all Good

MY SON, WHEN FEAR OF ALLĀH IS REAL, you shall see all good. A person who truly fears his Lord does not care about others and does not put himself in a position where his religion is at risk. Whoever takes care of Allāh's limits shall be taken care of by Him. Allāh's messenger (ﷺ) said to Ibn 'Abbās: “Safeguard Allāh and He will safeguard you. Safeguard Allāh and you will find Him in front of you.”<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ: Ahmad, 1/293, 303, 307, al-Tirmidhī, 2516. Al-Tirmidhī said: 'A *ḥasan sabīb* narration' and it is as he said. It was authenticated by al-Albānī (*Takbrij al-Sunnah li Ibn Abi 'Asim*, #316-317-318). The ḥadīth has many routes. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab has dedicated a great book to this ḥadīth called *Nūrū'l-Iqtibās fī Mishkāt Waṣīyyah al-Nabī li'bni 'Abbās*. cf the English translation of the Legacy of the Prophet (ﷺ) - An explanation to the Advice given to ibn 'Abbās [trans. Abu Rumaysah, Dār as-Sunnah, 1429/2009]. Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī said (*Said al-Khāṭir*): "I pondered over this ḥadīth but it confounded me and I almost felt helpless in solving it." Then he said: "So unfortunate indeed is the ignorance concerning this ḥadīth and the weak understanding of what it means." So do refer to its explanation as it contains great exhortation and general principles of Islām that are among the most important and highly deemed issues of our religion.

Do not forget, my son, that it was the good deeds that Yūnus had in store that saved him from hardship. Allāh Mighty and Sublime says:

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ  
كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَيِّرِينَ ١٤٤ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبَعَّثُونَ ١٤٥

Had he not been of them who glorify Allāh, he would have remained inside its belly till the day they will be resurrected.

[*Al-Saffāt* : 143-144]

It was also the evil deeds that Fir'aun had stored for himself that rendered him unable to find an escape when disaster befell him. He was told:

إِنَّكُنَّ وَقَدْ عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ

Is it now you believe while having disobeyed before.

[*Yūnus* : 91]

So store good deeds arising from *taqwā* for yourself and you shall see the results.

It was reported in a ḥadīth that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There is no youth who fears Allāh in his youth except that Allāh raises him in status when he is old.”<sup>88</sup>

Allāh Most High says:

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<sup>88</sup> Refer to: *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 4/139.

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ

أَشَدَّهُمْ أَيْتَهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَكَذَلِكَ بَنَعِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦﴾

And when he attained manhood, We gave him wisdom and knowledge. Thus We reward the doers of good.

[*Yūsuf* : 22]

And

إِنَّمَا مَنْ يَتَّقَ وَيَصْبِرُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيغُ أَجْرًا  
الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١﴾

Truly, he who fears Allāh and has patience, then surely, Allāh does not let the reward of the good doers be lost.

[*Yūsuf* : 90]

Know that the best actions you can store is lowering your gaze from the forbidden, not speaking without need, staying away from punishable deeds and preferring Him, Glorious is He, over your soul's desire. You are well aware of the ḥadīth of the three who entered the cave and then the rock blocked its entrance. One of them said: "O Allāh, I had my parents and children. I used to stand by my parents with milk and let them drink from it before my kids. If I did that for Your sake, help us now." One third of the rock moved away. The second one said: "Allāh, I hired a worker who wasn't pleased with his salary, so I made business with it. Then, one day he came to me and said: 'Will you not fear Allāh and give me my salary?' so I said: 'Go to those cows and the people who look after them and take them.' If I did that for Your sake, help us now." Another third of the rock moved away. The

third one said: “Allāh, I was in love with a cousin of mine but when I approached her she said: ‘Fear Allāh and do not break the seal without right,’ so I got up, off her. If I did that for Your sake, help us now.” The whole rock was lifted and they were able to escape.”<sup>89</sup>

Somebody had seen Sufyān al-Thaurī<sup>90</sup> in his dream and he was asked: “What did Allāh do to you?” He replied: “I had only been put into the grave and there I was, in front of Lord of the Worlds. I entered and straight away met someone who said: ‘Sufyan?’ I said: ‘[Yes, I am] Sufyan.’ He said: ‘Do you remember a day you preferred Allāh over your desires?’ I said: ‘Yes’ [upon answering] I was immediately served with big food plates from Paradise”

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<sup>89</sup> Al-Bukhārī: *Kitāb al-Ijara*, Chapter: “Who hires a worker who then leaves his salary (2272)”, Muslim: *Kitab al-Dhikri wa al-Du'ā wa al-Taubah wa al-Istighfār*, Chapter: “The story of the three in the cave and intercession through righteous deed”, (2743, 100), from the ḥadīth of Ibn 'Umar.

<sup>90</sup> *Sufyān ibn Sa'īd ibn Masrūq al-Thaurī Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Kūfī*: The trustworthy Ḥāfiẓ, jurist, worshipper, Imam and proof (d. 261). He was the most ascetic person of his time to the extent that he would deprive himself of any worldly matters in his gatherings. It is said that no-one in his time feared Allāh like he did nor did anybody have his reverence of Allāh. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said (*Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/206): “The virtues of this Imām are mentioned in a full volume by Ibn al-Jawzī. I have abridged them and mentioned a fair share in my book *al-Tārikh*.” The biography of this esteemed Imām can be found in *al-Hilya*, 6/356-7/144, in approximately 180 pages, *Siyar al-Ā'lam al-Nubulā*, 7/229, and *Tārikh Baghdād*, 9/151-174.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

# The Lives of Our Pious Predecessors

YOU SHOULD AIM TO BE PERFECT and as motivated as man can be, as many people are restricting themselves either to isolation from worldly matters or studying Sacred Knowledge, and only very few combine complete knowledge with complete action. I have acquainted myself with the lives of the Tabi'un and those after them and found the most complete of them to be four: Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib,<sup>91</sup> al-Hasan al-Baṣrī, Sufyān al-Thaurī and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal<sup>92</sup> may

<sup>91</sup> Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib Abū Muḥammad al-Qurashī al-Makhzūmī: The great Imam and scholar of Madīnah and the best of the Tabi'in in his time (d. 73). Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said (*al-Siyar*, 4/219): 'He had outstanding knowledge and application of it.' For his biography, refer to: *Hilyatu'l-Aṣliyā*, 2/161, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā*, 4/217, 246, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/51, Ibn Sa'd: *al-Tabaqāt* 5/119. Ibn al-Jawzī has dedicated a two volume book for his life and virtues as mentioned in *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā*, 21/369, and *al-Dhayl*, 1/418.

<sup>92</sup> Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: The Rabbānī Imām, al-Ṣiddiqī The Second, the firm bearer of tribulations. He was put to test in the days of Caliph al-Ma'mūn concerning the calamity of Qur'ān's creation. He stood firm and did not answer the way he was told to, and by this earned a high position in this world and the Hereafter. Ibn al-Jawzī has dedicated a volume to his life and virtues, so refer to it.

Allāh be pleased with them. These were only men but they had high ambitions and determination which we are lacking. Many of our predecessors were highly motivated, and if you wish to learn about them just read through *Sifat al-Safwa*.<sup>93</sup> You can ponder over the lives of Sa'īd, al-Hasan, Sufyān and Aḥmad<sup>94</sup> if you wish as I have dedicated a whole book for each one of them.

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<sup>93</sup> This book has been printed: First volume: *Matba'a al-Asil* of Ḥalab (1389 ah), second volume: *Matba'a al-Nabḍa al-Jadida* of Egypt (1390 AH), third volume: *Matba'a Wikālat al-Subūf* of Egypt (1393 AH), volume four: *Matba'a Dār al-Sha'b* of Egypt (1393 AH).

<sup>94</sup> In his explanation of Abū al-Dardā's ḥadīth "Who takes a path, seeking knowledge on it" (p. 52, 53), Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab described them as 'The Rabbānī scholars, the scholars of Afterlife.'

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

# Memorisation is Your Actual Capital

MY SON, you are aware that I have written a hundred books<sup>95</sup> and from amongst them is *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* which consists of twenty volumes<sup>96</sup>, *al-Tārīkh* which is twenty volumes as well. The rest of them are big and small, some five volumes, some four, some three, some two, and some more or less. By authoring these books I have left you in no need of

<sup>95</sup> The author is obviously talking about the amount he had written at that time, as the number of his works is greater than that. In fact, Shaikh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah counted them to be over 1000. Al-Dhahabī said: 'I do not know a scholar who has written what this man has.' You can refer to the titles of these books in *Siyar al-Ālam al-Nubulā'* and *Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*. Teacher 'Abd al-Hamīd al-'Aluji has written a book called *Mu'allafat* Ibn al-Jawzī which was printed by Dar al-Jumhuriyya, Baghdād (1395 AH). Refer to that while keeping in mind that many books were printed after this book. May Allāh, Most High, give us success in bringing out this mighty legacy.

<sup>96</sup> Al-Dhahabī said (*al-Siyar*, 21/368): 'In *tafsīr* he authored the large *al-Mughnī* and then abridged it to four volumes and entitled it *Zād al-Masīr*.' Ibn Rajab said (*Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/416): 'Al-Mughnī, the *tafsīr*, consists of 81 parts, and *Zād al-Masīr* is *'Ilm al-Tafsīr* of four parts.' The latter has been printed by *al-Maktab al-Islāmi* (1364 AH) in nine parts with the verification of Zuhayr al-Shāwīsh.

borrowing books or focusing on writing them yourself. Therefore, you should focus on memorising, for memorisation is your main capital and using what you have memorised is your profit. Sincerely seek refuge in the Truth (Allāh) in both affairs and stay well within His boundaries. Allāh says:

إِن تَصْنَعُ وَاللَّهُ يَنْصُرُكُمْ

If you support Allāh, He will support you.

[Muhammad : 7]

And:

فَإِذَا ذُكِرْتُمْ

Remember Me and I shall remember you.

[al-Baqarah : 152]

And:

وَأَفْوَأْنِي بِهَدِيَّكُمْ

Fulfill My covenant and I shall fulfill yours.

[al-Baqarah : 40]

Beware of just having theoretical knowledge without putting it into action, for those who accompany the rulers and associate with worldly people have turned their backs to enacting their knowledge which in turn has deprived them of the blessings and benefit it can bring.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

# Knowledge and Action are Intertwined

**B**E CAREFUL OF BUSYING YOURSELF with mere worship with no learning, as many ascetics and Šūfis have gone astray due to acting without knowledge.<sup>97</sup>

Cover yourself with the two beautiful garments that will not make you famous among the material folks with their classiness, nor famous among the ascetics with their ruggedness. Take your-

<sup>97</sup> Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (*Jāmi' Bayān al-'Ilm*, p. 54), al-Khatīb (*al-Faqīh wa al-Mutafāqqīh*, 1/19) and Ibn Abī Shaibah (*al-Musannaf*, 13/470) related that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said: "Who acts without knowledge harms more than benefits." Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (p. 215), Ibn Abī Shaibah (13/499) related also that al-Hasan al-Baṣrī said: "Seek knowledge in a way that does not harm your worship, and worship in a way that does not harm your knowledge. Who acts without knowledge harms more than benefits." The great scholar Ibn al-Qayyim said (*Miftāh Dār al-Sa'ada*, 1/ 82, 83): "A person who acts without knowledge is like someone who travels without a guide, and it is known that a person like this will more likely be destroyed than saved. In any case, even if we'd suppose that he would survive by agreement, his deed would never be considered as something praiseworthy. All men of intellect agree that the case is quite contrary. Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah used to say: "Who abandons the guide strays from the path, and none can be guided with other than that which the Messenger came with."

self to account for every glance, word and step you take as you will be asked about all of it.

Those who hear you speak will benefit from your knowledge according to how much you yourself benefit from it. When a preacher doesn't apply his knowledge his exhortation will flow off the hearts' surface like water flows off a rock.<sup>98</sup>

So, do not ever preach without an intention and do not walk without an intention. Don't even swallow a bite without an intention.<sup>99</sup> All of this will become clear to you once you get acquainted with the characteristics of our predecessors.

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<sup>98</sup> Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī related (*Iqtidā' al-'Ilm al-'Amal*, p. 97) by way of Ja'far from Malik who said: "I read the following from the Torah: 'When a scholar does not act upon his knowledge, his admonishment flows off peoples' hearts like a drop of water flows off a rock'" Ibn al-Jawzī said (*al-Yawāqīt al-Jawzīyyah*, p. 95): "Knowledge and action are twins whose mother is high motivation."

<sup>99</sup> You can read about intention and its importance: *Jamī' 'Ulūm wa al-Hikam*, p. 20, 21.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### Some Excellent Books to Read

**Y**OU SHOULD READ *Minhāj al-Muridīn*<sup>100</sup> as it can teach you the correct way of dealing with your Lord. Make it your companion and teacher. Also, read through *Sāid al-Khāṭir*<sup>101</sup> as it mentions occurrences that help you in rectifying your

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<sup>100</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī has authored a book on how to deal with one's Lord and his servants called *Minhāj al-Qāsīdīn* which he abridged from *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. He said in *al-Qiṣāṣ wa al-Muthakkirin* that the book discusses these methodologies, but it hasn't been printed to this day. Its manuscripts are located in Paris (1295), Turkey (al-Fātiḥ, 2872) and al-Zahīrīyyah (24-*Tasawwuf*). An abridgment of the book has been printed, however, I do not know whether *Minhāj al-Qāsīdīn* and *Minhāj al-Muridīn* are one and the same or not. Allāh really knows best. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī mentioned *Minhāj al-Qāsīdīn* being two volumes whilst Ibn Rajab said it consists of four.

<sup>101</sup> *Sāid al-Khāṭir* (Grasped Thoughts) is one of al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī's books which is a record of grasped thoughts, affairs and ideas he had been thinking about that should really have been memorised so they would not be forgotten as mentioned in the preface of the book. According to al-Dhahabi, the book is four volumes and Ibn Rajab mentions that it consists of 65 parts. It has been printed by *Dar al-Kutub al-Hadīthīyyah* with the verification of Muḥammad Ghazālī, *Maktaba al-Kulliyat al-Azharīyyah* with verification by 'Abd al-Qādir

worldly and religious affairs. Memorise *Jannat al-Nadhar*<sup>102</sup> as it gives you a sufficient grasp of jurisprudence. Spend time reading *al-Hadā'iq*<sup>103</sup> and it apprise you of most of the ḥadīth and by reading *al-Kashf* you will know the hidden benefits of narrations in Bukhari and Muslim.<sup>104</sup> Do not busy yourself with Qur'ānic commentaries written by non-Arabs, and in truth, after *al-Mughnī* and *Zād al-Masīr* you don't need any other commentaries at all.<sup>105</sup> As for works on exhortation, I have collected for you what completely suffice you.

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Ahmad 'Aṭā who made some faulty statements in it that do not suite al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī. The book has also been printed in Beirut with the verification of Sayyid al-Jāmili who wrote some incorrect comments and should have not have dared to write them on the book. May Allāh pardon us all. The book has also been printed by *Dar al-Fikr*, Damascus, with verification by 'Alī and Nāji al-Tantawī, and there are also other prints.

<sup>102</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab mentioned it in *Dhail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/418, and said: 'It is *al-Ta'qīqa al-Wusta*'

<sup>103</sup> Al-Dhahabī said that it consists of two volumes and ibn Rajab said it is 34 parts. In the end of *al-Qisāṣ wa al-Muthakkirin*, p. 372, Ibn al-Jawzī said that this book is *Ghāyat al-Wā'iq*. It has manuscripts in *Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah*.

<sup>104</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Rajab mentioned it in *al-Thail*, 1/417, and called it *al-Kashf fi Mushkil al-Ṣahīhain* (four volumes).

<sup>105</sup> Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī said (*al-Qisāṣ wa al-Muthakkirin*, p. 371, 372): 'I have gathered books on tools of sermon giving, the likes of which non has authored before me. In the field of Qur'ānic exegesis polished from errors and void of fabricated ḥadīths I have *Zād al-Masīr fī 'Ilm al-Tafsīr* and *al-Mughnī* which is the bigger of the two. As for book of exhortation, they are too many to mention, so I'll suffice with a few: *Taḥṣīrat al-Mubtadī'*, *Kanz al-Muthakkir*, *al-Lu'lū'*, *al-Malīb*, *al-Mudīsh*, *al-Mulāhib*, *Sabānajd*, *Nasīm al-Riyād* and *al-Muntakhab*. Some of these books suffice a sermon giver for the rest of his life, leaving him no need for rhetorical flourishes written by non-Arabs that are mostly senseless lies anyway.'

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

# The Characteristics of a Beneficial Preacher

INGLE WITH OTHERS IN A GOOD way but at the same time be strictly isolated because isolation safeguards you from having to deal with bad people and preserves your dignity. A preacher, in particular, should not be seen behaving like common folks or spending time in the market place or laughing out loud. This is to make sure that people have a good opinion about him<sup>106</sup> and lend an ear to him when he

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<sup>106</sup> Ibn al-Jawzī said (*al-Saīd*, p. 232): “I am unable to figure delight, dignity, honor, rest or well being that is better for a scholar than that attained in isolation. Through it he achieves physical and religious well being and earns a great status with Allāh and rest of the creation as well. This is because people do not appreciate a person who mingles with them, and that's why it is staying away from people that makes our Caliphs so venerated among the people. If the laypeople see a scholar giving leeway in some permissible matter their appreciation for him becomes less, so he must protect his knowledge and make them realize its value. Some of our predecessors have said: ‘We used to joke around and laugh, but once people began to follow our example I realized we shouldn't do that.’ Sufyān al-Thaurī said: ‘Learn this knowledge and keep silent. Do not mix it with joking around lest the hearts spit it out.’”

speaks. However, if you have no choice but to mix with them, control your temper and forebear others because once see their true mannerisms, you will be unable to mix with them.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### Fulfilling the Rights of Others

**G**IVE EVERYBODY THEIR DUE RIGHTS - wives, children and relatives. Observe every hour in your life and see how you spend it. Try not to use it except in the most honorable way possible. Do not waste your self and get in the habit of doing the best things and send something to the grave's chest that will make you rejoice when you get there:

O you who ran after the material life  
Deluded by his hopes so long

Death will come to you suddenly  
And the grave is the chest of deeds

Pay attention to the consequences of things as that will make patience with things you desire and dislike easy for you. If you sometimes find yourself neglectful of your duties, take your soul to the graveyards and remind it of the nearness of its departure from this world.

Plan your affairs - and Allāh is the true planner - and spend but

not foolishly lest you become in need of others. Taking care of one's wealth is a part of this religion, and "it is better to leave something for your inheritors than leaving them in need of others."<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> A ḥadīth says: "For you to leave your heirs wealthy is better than leaving them poor and begging from people." Related by al-Bukhārī, 2742, Muslim, 1628, 75, from Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### A Beautiful Closure

MY SON, know that we come from the sons of Abū Bakr *al-Siddīq*<sup>108</sup> and our father is al-Qāsim Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdu’l-Rahmān ibn Abū Bakr ibn Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*)<sup>109</sup> whose life has been critically documented in *Sifat al-Safwa*. After him, our forefathers were businessmen so among the later family there hasn’t been anyone who has

<sup>108</sup> His lineage is as follows: Abū’l-Faraj ‘Abdu’l-Rahmān ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥamadī ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ja’far ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Qāsim ibn al-Nadr ibn al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Faqīh ‘Abdu’l-Rahmān ibn al-Faqīh al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad son of Allāh’s Messengers (ﷺ) caliph Abū Bakr *al-Siddīq al-Qurashī al-Taimī al-Bakrī al-Baghdādī*.

<sup>109</sup> The exemplary Imam, the Ḥāfiẓ and proof, the scholar of his time in Madīnah with Sālim and ‘Ikrima, Abu Muḥammad and Abū ‘Abdu’l-Rahmān al-Qurashī. He was born during the caliphate of ‘Alī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and nurtured on the lap of his aunt, the mother of the believers ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from whom he learned and reported a lot. He died in year 7 AH. For his biography, refer to: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Tabaqāt*, 5/187, Khalifah: *al-Tabaqāt*, 344, *Hīyatūl-Awliyā’*, 2/183, *Tabthib al-Asma’i wa al-Lughāt*, 2/55, *Tathkiraṭ al-Huffāz*, 1/96, *al-‘Ibar*, 1/132, *Siyar al-‘Ālām al-Nubulā’*, 5/54, *Shātharāt al-Dhabab*, 1/135, *Sifat al-Safwa*, 2/88.

been given motivation to pursue Sacred Knowledge except me. Now your turn has come. Strive hard and do not fall short of my expectations of you for you. I have trusted your affair to Allāh, Glorious and Most High, and He alone I ask to grant you success in knowledge and its application.

This is what I was able to admonish you with, and with Allāh, Most High and Exalted, is all might and power.

Ever increasing praise be to Allāh, and may His blessings and peace be upon our Leader Muḥammad, as well as his Family and Companions.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> We ask Allāh to give us and rest of the Muslims benefit through this exhortation. May He forgive its writer and the one it was written to along with all those who read it and spread it. May he forgive the commentator and all those who call others to read it and encourage them to act upon its message. This commentary was finished on the blessed day of Friday in 1409 AH in the city of al-Isma‘iliyya. Praise be to Allāh, by whose blessing all good deeds come to be. May Allāh send praises on Muḥammad (ﷺ) and his followers.

Abū al-Ḥārith Ashraf ibn ‘Abd al-Maqsūd ibn ‘Abdu'l-Rahīm, May Allāh forgive him, his parents and rest of the Muslims.

## APPENDIX

### Persons Cited in the Text

‘Ā’ISHAH: bint Abū Bakr *as-Siddīq*, the Mother of the Believers and most beloved wife of the Prophet (ﷺ). She reported many *ahādīth* from the Prophet and many Companions and Successors reported from her. She died in the year 58H.

‘ABDULLĀH BIN ‘ABBĀS: ibn ‘Abdul-Muttalib ibn Hāshim ibn ‘Abd Munāf al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, the cousin of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the interpreter of the Qur’ān. He was born three years before the *Hijrah* and was called the ‘Ocean of Knowledge’ due to his vast knowledge. He took part in the *Jihād* in North Africa in the year 27H and died in the year 68H.

‘ABDULLĀH AL-DĀMAGHĀNI: The profound scholar, the mufti of ‘Iraq, the judge, Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Hasan ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Husawayhi al-Dāmaghānī al-Hanāfi (Dāmaghānī refers to somebody from Dāmaghān which is a big city between al-Rayy and Naysābur). al-Dhahabī said: ‘He was a person of nobility and great decency and has been compared to judge Abū Yūsuf in his times.

Among his children were Imāms and judges.' He died in 478 and his son, the judge of judges Abū al-Ḥasan led his funeral prayer. For his biography, refer to: *Tārikh Baghdād*, 3/109, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 12/129, *Shatharāt al-Dhabab*, 3/362, *al-Fawā'id al-Bahiyah*, 182-183, *al-Kāmil*, 10/146, *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā'*, 18/485, *al-'Ibar*, 3/292.

'**ABDULLĀH BIN MAS'ŪD**: ibn Ghāfil ibn Ḥabīb al-Hadhlī Abū 'Abdur-Rahmān. One of the scholars amongst the Companions and he witnessed *Badr* and the following battles. He had many virtues and died in the year 32H.

'**ABDULLĀH BIN 'UMAR**: ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-'Adawī, Abū 'Abdur-Rahmān, the noble Companion and scholar. He reported many *ahādīth* from the Messenger (ﷺ) and died in the year 73H.

**ABŪ BAKR AL-ṢIDDĪQ**: 'Abdullāh ibn 'Uthmān ibn Āmir al-Qurashī. The first *Khalifah* of the Messenger (ﷺ), his companion in the cave, his closest friend and one of the ten promised Paradise. He was the first man to accept Islām and died in the year 13H.

**ABŪ AD-DARDĀ'**: Uwaymir ibn Mālik ibn Zayd ibn Qays al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī. There is a difference of opinion concerning his name. He accepted Islām on the day of *Badr* and witnessed *Uhud*. He was from the Legal Jurists and ascetics of the Companions. He died in the year 32H.

**ABŪ DĀWŪD**: Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath ibn Ishāq ibn Bashīr, Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, the *Imām*, *Hāfiẓ* and author of the famous *Sunan*. He died in the year 275H.

**ABŪ AL-FADL IBN NĀṢIR**: The *Imām*, Muḥaddith and *Hāfiẓ*,

Mufid al-‘Irāq, Abū al-Fadl Muḥammad ibn Nāsir ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Amm al-Salāmī from Baghdaḍ (467-551). Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī benefitted in the field of ḥadīth by accompanying this Imām as indicated by Dhahabī (*Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 21/367) and confirmed by al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn al-Jawzī himself (*al-Muntaẓam*, 10/163). Al-Dhahabī also related this from him (*al-Miṣān*, 20/267), saying: He said: ‘Our shaikh was reliable, a man of good memory and precision. He was from *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah* and had not faults worth mentioning. He was responsible of hearing me. I heard the *Musnad* of Aḥmad and the major books in his reading and it was he whom I took the science of ḥadīth from. He would remember Allāh a lot and was quick to shed tears.’ For his biography, refer to: *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 20/265, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 3/1289, *Maṇāqib Aḥmad*, 530, 531, *Miṛāt al-Zamān*, 8/138, *Thaīl Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/225-229, *al-Bidāyah wa’l-Nihāyah*, 12/233.

ABŪ HURAYRAH: ‘Abdur-Raḥmān ibn Ṣakhr ad-Dusī. His name is greatly differed over. He accepted Islām in the year 7H and reported the most ḥadīth from the Prophet (ﷺ). He died in the year 59H.

‘ALĪ BIN ABĪ ṬĀLIB: ibn ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī, the fourth Rightly Guided *Khalifah* and one of ten promised Paradise. He accepted Islām at the age of thirteen and was famous for his chivalry, bravery and knowledge. He married Fātimah, the daughter of the Prophet (ﷺ) and was martyred in the year 40H.

AL-BARĀ’A BIN MĀLIK: ibn an-Nadr al-Anṣārī. He witnessed *Uḥud* and gave the pledge of allegiance under the tree. He

was martyred in the year 20H on the Day of *Tustor*.

**ABŪ HĀKIM IBRĀHIM IBN DINĀR:** The great exemplary scholar Abū Ḥākim Ibrāhīm ibn Dīnār al-Nahruwānī al-Ḥanbālī, one of the Imāms of Baghdād, a godly ascetic, who was benevolent and forbearing. He was one of the greatest scholars in the field of inheritance. He established a school by *Bāb al-Azaj inqata'a bihā yata'abbiḍu*. He preferred to be unknown, and was always content with his condition. He used to earn his bread as a tailor, taking only two coins for a garment. Some individuals attempted to anger him but to no avail, and he would serve the disabled and old timers with a joyful face. His hearing of ḥadīth was correct. He passed away in 556 AH. (al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī: *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 20/396. For his biography, refer to: Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntazam*, 10/201, 202, *Thail Tabaqāt al-Ḥanabila*, 1/231-241, *Shatharāt al-Thabab*, 4/176, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 12/245)

**ABŪ AL-KHATTĀB:** The Shaikh, Imām and great God fearing scholar of the Ḥanbalites, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Maḥfūz ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan al-‘Irāqī al-Kalwadhbānī at first, then al-Baghdādī later on (d. 510 AH). Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said: ‘Abū al-Khaṭṭāb was a fine scholar. He was benevolent, truthful, well mannered and spoke extraordinarily eloquent Arabic. He was a smart man who narrated many ahādīth and studied and recorded ḥadīth as well.’ Ibn Rajab said (*al-Thail*, 1/120): ‘Abū al-Khaṭṭāb was a great jurist who used to focus much on verification of matters. He has checked and investigated numerous matters of jurisprudence and legal theory and differs with the majority view of the Ḥanbalites in some issues.’ After this he went on to mention many examples of that. For his biography, refer to: *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 19/348, Ibn al-Jawzī:

*al-Muntażam*, 9/190-193, *al-Kāmil*, 10/524, *al-'Ibar*, 4/21, *Mirāt al-Zamān*, 8/41-42, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 12/180, *Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/116-127, *Shātharāt al-Thahab*, 4/27-28.

**ABŪ MUḤ AMMAD AL-HALĀWĀNI:** The jurist 'Abdu'l-Rahmān ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Halāwānī, the jurist and Imam Abu Muḥammad ibn Abī al-Fath. Al-Munthirī said: 'He was one of scholars of the Hanbalites and was versed in jurisprudence, Qur'ānic exegesis and ḥadīth.' Ibn Rajab said: 'I saw something that was written in his handwriting and that indicates that he has authored a major commentary on the differed upon issues. He has also written a 41 volume commentary on the Qur'ān which he has talked about.' For his biography, refer to: Ibn Rajab: *Thail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/221.

**AHMAD IBN ḤANBAL:** Ibn Hilāl ash-Shaybānī, Abū 'Abdullāh, the *Imām* of the *Sunnah* and author of the famous *Musnad*. He was known for his knowledge of ḥadīth, *fiqh*, and his *taqwā* and asceticism. He was put to test in the days of Caliph al-Ma'mūn concerning the calamity of Qur'ān's creation. He stood firm and did not answer the way he was told to, and by this earned a high position in this world and the Hereafter. Ibn al-Jawzī has dedicated a volume to his life and virtues, so refer to it. He died in the year 241H.

**ĀMIR IBN 'ABD QAIS:** Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh (and it is said: Abū 'Amr) al-Tamīmī al-'Anbarī 'Amir ibn 'Abd Qais al-Baṣrī. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī described him as: The example, the *wāli* and the ascetic. He is one of the eight leading *Tabi'īn* in ascetism. Ka'b al-Ahbār once saw him and said: 'This is the devotee of this nation.' Qātada said: 'When 'Amir was on the verge of death he cried.' He was asked: 'Why are you crying?' so he

said: 'I am not crying because I fear death or crave this world. It is the thirst of the midday heat and the standing at night that I cry for.' He is said to have died in the time of Mu'awiya. (Refer to his biography: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Tabaqāt*, 7/103, Ahmad: *al-Zuhd*, 218, *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 2/87, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'*, 4/15, 'Alqama ibn Murthid: *Zuhd al-Thamaniya min al-Tabi'in*, p. 37-40.)

'ATĀ IBN ABŪ RABĀH: 'Atā ibn Abū Rabāh Aslam. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said: 'The Imām, Shaikh al-Islām and the Mufti of Harām, Abū Muḥammad al-Qurashī, their freed slave from Makkah. His loyalty is said to have been for people of Jumāh. He was raised with al-Janad and grew up in Makkah. He was born during the caliphate of 'Uthmān.' Atā was black, one eyed, snub-nosed, lame and limping and finally became blind as well. He was a trustworthy narrator, a jurist, a scholar, a narrator of many Hadeeths and was the most knowledgeable concerning the rules of pilgrimage. Refer to his biography: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Tabaqāt*, 5/467, *Tadhib al-Kāmal*, 938, *al-'Ibar*, 1/141, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'*, 5/78, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 9/306, *al-'Aqd al-Thāmin*, 6/84, *Shātharāt al-Thāhab*, 1/147. The narration was related by: al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī: *al-Faqih wa al-Mutafaqqib*, 1/31, who made this chapter heading regarding it: 'Those who rised from being slaves to sitting in the gatherings of the kings.'

BUKHĀRĪ: Muḥammad bin Ismā'il bin Ibrāhīm bin al-Mughīrah, Abū 'Abdullāh. He was born in the year 194H and became one of the *Imāms* of ḥadīth and was nicknamed 'The Leader of the Believers in ḥadīth.' He died in the year 256H.

AL-HASAN IBN ABŪ'L-HASAN AL-BAŞRĪ ABŪ SA'ĪD: The freed

slave of Zayd ibn Thābit, the example of ascetic scholars and one of the great characters of the Tabi‘in. He died in 110. Ayyūb al-Sakhtyānī said: ‘Had you seen him you would have said that you have never sat with a scholar of jurisprudence.’ Abu Ja‘far al-Bāqir said: ‘That is the person whose speech resembles that of the Prophets.’ Refer to his biography: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Tabaqāt*, 7/156, *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 2/131, Ahmad: *al-Zuhd*, 2/225, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'*, 4/563, *Tathkira al-Huffaz*, 1/66. Ibn al-Jawzī has dedicated a book for the life and virtues of this Imam which is printed and available.

**IBRĀHĪM IBN ADHAM:** The exemplary Imām, the knower and the master of ascetics, Abū Ishāq al-‘Ajlī al-Khurāsanī al-Bakhlī, the resident of Syria (approximately 100-662). Abu Nu‘aym said: ‘I heard Sufyān say: ‘Ibrāhīm ibn Adham resembled Ibrāhīm al-Khalīl. Had he been a Sahābi he would have surely been a virtuous man.’’ His biography can be found in *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'* (7/367-8/58), *Tabaqāt al-Auliya'* (5/15), *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'* (7/387), Ibn Athir’s *al-Kamil* (6/56), *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah* (10/135-145) and *Shatharāt al-Thahab* (1/255-256).

**IBN HIBBĀN:** Abū Hātim Muḥammad ibn Hibbān al-Tamīmī al-Bustī, the *Hāfiẓ*, *Mujtahid* and author of the famous *Saḥīḥ ibn Hibbān*. He died in the year 354H.

**KAHMAS IBN AL-HASAN AL-TAMĪMĪ:** The Hanafite from al-Baṣra, the worshipper Abū al-Ḥaṣan, one of the major figures of the trustworthy. He was a pious worshiper who died in 149. From the examples of his plentiful worship is that he would pray 1000 units every day, and when he got weary he would say (to his soul): ‘Get up, you abode of all evil, for by

Allāh I have never been pleased with you for Allāh.' (Refer to his biography: *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/174, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'* 6/316, *Khulasa al-Tahthib al-Kamal*, 322, *Tahthib al-Tahthib*, 5408, *Shatharāt al-Dhabab*, 1/225.)

**MAKHŪL:** the scholar of Syria. His name is Makhūl ibn Abī Muslim Shahrab ibn Shathil ibn Sind ibn Shirwan ibn Yazdak ibn Yaghuth ibn Kisra. He was taken prisoner in Kabul but his master's identity is disputed over, but the most correct of opinions is that he was the slave of a Huthali woman. He was from the middle of the Tabi'in and died in 112, 113, or 114. Abū Ḥātim said: 'Nobody in Syria is as knowledgeable in jurisprudence as Makhūl.' For his biography, refer to: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Tabaqāt*, 7/453, *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 5/177, *Tahthib al-Asmā'i wa al-Lugbāt*, 2/113, 114, *Siyar al-A'lam al-Nubulā'*, 5/155, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/107, *al-'Ibar*, 1/140, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 9/305, *Husn al-Muhadara*, 1/119.

**MA'RŪF AL-KARKHĪ:** Abū Maḥfūz al-Baghdādī described by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhababī as: 'The authority of the ascetics, the blessing of our times.' Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī has gathered his virtues in a book that has been printed. He passed away in 200 AH. Imām Ahmad said that he is a person whose *du'ā* is answered. 'Abd Allāh ibn Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal said: 'I said to my father: 'Did Ma'rūf have any knowledge?' to which he replied: 'My son, he had the basis of all knowledge and that is fear of Allāh.' (Refer to his biography: *Tabaqāt al-Auliya'*, 280, 285, *Tabaqāt al-Ṣufīyya*, 83-90, *Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/381, 389, *Sifāt al-Safwā*, 2/79-83, *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 8/360, 368, *Siyar al-A'lam l-Nubulā'*, (0/339, 345.)

**MUHAMMAD IBN SĪRĪN:** The Imām and Shaikh al-Islām, Abū

Bakr al-Anṣārī al-Anasī al-Baṣrī, the freed slave of Anas ibn Mālik, the companion and servant of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). He died in 110. Abū 'Uwana said: 'I saw Muhammad ibn Sirrīn in the marketplace, and nobody saw him without him mentioning Allāh.' For his biography, refer to: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Tabaqāt*, 7/193, *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 2/263, *Tārikh Baghdād*, 5/331, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/73, *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 4/606, *al-'Ibar*, 1/135, *Mir'āt al-Janān*, 1/232, *al-Bidāyah wa'l-Nihāyah*, 9/267, *Shatharāt al-Thahab*, 1/138.

**MUSLIM:** Ibn al-Ḥajjāj ibn Muslim al-Qushayrī, Abū al-Ḥusain an-Naisābūrī, the *Hāfiẓ* and one of the great *Imāms* of this nation. He is the author of the *Ṣahīh* which is the most authentic book of ḥadīth after *Bukhārī*. He died in the year 261H.

**AN-NASĀ'Ī:** Abu 'Abdur-Rahmān Ahmād ibn Shu'ayb ibn 'Ali al-Khurasanī The author of the famous *Sunan*, the *mujahid* and *Hāfiẓ*. He was known for his strictness in grading ḥadīth narrators.

**SA'D BIN ABĪ WAQQĀS:** Sa'd ibn Mālik ibn Ahīb ibn 'Abd Munāf al-Qurashī al-Zuhrī Abū Ishāq ibn Abī Waqqās. One of the ten who were promised Paradise and one whose supplications were answered. He was the last of the ten to pass away in the year 55H.

**SA'ĪD BIN AL-MUSAYYAB:** Abū Muḥammad al-Qurashī al-Makhzūmī: The great Imam and scholar of Madīnah and the best of the *Ṭabi'īn* in his time (d. 73). Al-Dhahabī said (*al-Siyar*, 4/219): 'He had outstanding knowledge and application of it.' For his biography, refer to: *Hilyatu'l-Auliya'*, 2/161, *Siyar al-Ā'lām al-Nubulā'*, 4/217, 246, *Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/51, Ibn

Sa‘d: *al-Tabaqāt* 5/119. Ibn al-Jawzī has dedicated a two volume book for his life and virtues as mentioned in *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 21/369, and *al-Thail*, 1/418.

SUFYAN IBN SA‘ID: Sufyān ibn Sa‘īd ibn Masrūq al-Thawrī Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Kufī: The trustworthy Ḥāfiẓ, jurist, worshiper, Imām and proof (d. 261). He was the most ascetic person of his time to the extent that he would deprive himself of any worldly matters in his gatherings. It is said that no-one in his time feared Allāh like he did nor did anybody have his reverence of Allāh. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said (*Tathkirat al-Huffāz*, 1/206): ‘The virtues of this Imām are mentioned in a full volume by Ibn al-Jawzī. I have abridged them and mentioned a fair share in my book *al-Tārikh*.’ The biography of this esteemed Imām can be found in *al-Hilya*, 6/356-7/144, in approximately 180 pages, *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 7/229, and *Tārikh Baghdaḍ*, 9/151-174.

SULAYMĀN IBN ‘ABD AL-MĀLIK: ibn Marwān ibn al-Hakam ibn Abī al-‘As ibn Umayyah, the caliph, Abū Ayyūb al-Qurashi al-Umawī. He was pledged allegiance to in 69 after his brother al-Walīd, and he passed away in 99. His caliphate lasted for two years, nine months and twenty days. Ibn Sirīn said: ‘Allāh have mercy on Sulaymān. He started his caliphate by reviving the prayer and finished it by appointing ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz as his successor.’ For his biography, refer to: al-Tabārī: *al-Tārikh*, 6/546, Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Kāmil*, 5/37, *Wafayāt al-Āyān*, 2/460, 467, *al-‘Ibar*, 1/115, 118, *al-Bidāyah wa’l-Nihāyah*, 9/183, *Shatharāt al-Thahab*, 1/116, *Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 5/111.

RĀBI‘A AL-‘ADAWĪYYA: Umm al-Khayr bint Isma‘il, the pious,

covered, ascetic and God fearing worshipper from Basra. She is said to have lived for 80 years and died in 180 AH. The narration was related by al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī by way of Ibn Abī al-Dunya: We were told by Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn, I was told by ʻIsā ibn Maymun al-ʻAttār, I was told by ‘Abda bint Abī Shawwāl who used to serve Rābiʻa al-ʻAdawīyya: ‘Rābiʻa used to pray the whole night. When morning would come she would lay down till the sky would turn to yellow. I used to hear her say: ‘My soul, how much do you sleep and till what time do you stand up? You might sleep for just a little and never get up until the Day of Resurrection.’’ See (*Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 8/242, *al-ʻIbar*, 1/278), Ibn Khalakān (*Wafayāt al-Āyān*, 3/215), *Ibn al-ʻImād* (*Shatharāt al-Dhahab*, 1/193), Ibn Kathīr (*al-Bidāyah waʼl-Nihāyah*, 10/186), al-Khāṭib al-Baghdādī (*Tārikh Baghdād*, 2/40) and Ibn al-Jawzī (*Sifat al-Ṣafwa*, 4/17-19). Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn al-Jawzī even dedicated a book for her virtues as mentioned by al-Dhahabī (*Siyar al-Ālām al-Nubulā*, 8/242) and also named his oldest daughter and mother of his grandson Abū al-Muẓāfir (the author of *Mir’āt al-Zamān*) Rābiʻa.

AT-TIRMIDHĪ: Muḥammad ibn ʻIsā ibn Sawrah ibn Mūsā ibn ad-Ḏāḥḥāk as-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, the *Imām*, *Hāfiẓ* and the author of the famous *Sunan*. He was trustworthy and precise and one of the students of Bukhārī. He died in the year 279H.

AL-ZUHRĪ: Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn ʻUbaydullāh al-Qurasahī, Abū Bakr, one of the *Imāms* of this nation. He was one of the most knowledgeable people of his time of ḥadīth and the Qur’ān. He was trustworthy and precise and narrated many aḥādīth. He died in the year 124H.

## Index of Arabic Words

AWLIYĀ': plural of *wālī*; friend, ally, loyal companion. From the word *wilāyah* meaning loyalty and closeness, the opposite of enmity.

BARZAKH: barrier, isthmus, A barrier that is erected between the deceased and this life preventing him from returning and a generic reference to the life that commences after death.

BID'AH: innovation, that which is newly introduced into the religion of Allāh.

DA'ĪF: weak; the ḥadīth that is neither ṣahīh nor ḥasan because it fails to meet one of their requirements. It is of varying degrees of severity, the most severe of which being *maudū'*, fabricated.

DHIKR: remembrance, recollection, technically referring the remembrance of Allāh.

DU'Ā: supplication, invocation, it is an action of worship that may only be directed to Allāh. It is of two types, supplication through worship (*du'ā 'ibādah*) and supplication of request (*du'ā mas'alah*). The first type of *du'ā* can be understood when one understands that every act of worship is done with the unstated plea that Allāh accept that action of worship and the desire to draw closer to him; and hence attain His pleasure. Hence every action of worship is a type of request to Allāh. The second type of *du'ā* is whereby one explicitly asks his Lord of something such as 'O Allāh! Grant me good in this world and the Hereafter.' The second type includes the first type and the first type necessitates the second type.

HADĪTH: A text attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) describing his actions,

words, descriptions and tacit approvals. It consists of two portions, the body of the text (*matn*) and the *isnād*. Rarely the term is also used to refer to a text attributed to a Companion or a *Tābi'i*.

**HASAN:** good, fair. A ḥadīth whose *isnād* is continuously linked of just, morally upright narrators but whose precision (*dabt*) falls short of the requirements of the *ṣahīh* ḥadīth; containing no irregularity (*shādh*) and no hidden defect (*'illah*). A ḥadīth can be ḥasan in and of itself, or contain a defect but still be ruled to be so due to supporting evidences.

**IHSĀN:** beneficence, excellence. To worship Allāh as if one is seeing Him, and knowing that even though one sees Him not, He sees the servant.

**'ILM:** knowledge.

**ĪMĀN:** The firm belief, complete acknowledgement and acceptance of all that Allāh and His Messenger have commanded to have faith in, submitting to it both inwardly and outwardly. It is the acceptance and belief of the heart that includes the actions of the heart and body, therefore it encompasses the establishment of the whole religion. This is why the Imāms and Salaf used to say, 'Faith is the statement of the heart and tongue, action of the heart, tongue and limbs.' Hence it comprises statement, action and belief, it increases through obedience and decreases through disobedience. It includes the beliefs of faith, its morals and manners and the actions demanded by it.

**ISLĀM:** submission, submitting to the will of Allāh through following His law as revealed upon the tongue of the Messenger (ﷺ).

**ISNĀD:** support. The chain of authorities on which a narration is based, linking the end narrator of a narration to the one it is attributed to, be it the Prophet (ﷺ) or anyone else, narrator by narrator.

**JĀHILIYYAH:** Pre-Islāmic Ignorance. Technically this refers to the condition of a people before the guidance of Allāh reaches them, or the state of a people that prevents them from accepting the guidance of Allāh.

**JAHL:** ignorance.

**KALĀM:** speech, discourse. Technically used to refer to dialectics and

scholastic theology.

**KHALAF:** successors. A reference to those who followed a path other than the path of the Salaf.

**KHALĪFAH:** pl. *khulafā'*. Successor, representative. The Successors of the Prophet (ﷺ), head of the Islāmic state. Also called *Amir al-Mu'minīn* or Leader of the Believers.

**KUFR:** denial, rejection, hiding, technically referring to disbelief. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

**QADR:** Divine Decree and Destiny.

**QUR'ĀN:** The actual Word of Allāh revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Arabic language through the medium of the Angel Gabriel and the greatest miracle bestowed him. It consists of 114 chapters commencing with al-Fātihah and ending with an-Nās.

**RUQYĀ:** recitation used to cure an illness or disease. It can only be done in the Arabic tongue, in words whose meaning is understood, using verses of the Qur'ān or supplications of the Prophet combined with the belief that it is only Allāh who in reality gives the cure.

**SABR:** patience and steadfastness, the restraint of ones self to that which is dictated by the divine law. It is of three levels, steadfastness in the obedience of Allāh, steadfastness in avoiding the prohibited matters and patience at the onset of calamity. *Ikhlas* can never be complete without *sidq* and *sidq* can never be complete without *ikhlās* and the two can never be complete without *sabr*. The person is patient through Allāh, i.e. seeking His aid Alone; for Allāh, i.e. arising out of love for Him and the desire to draw close to Him; and with Allāh, i.e. doing only that which He wills.

**SHĀHĀBAH:** The Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), those who saw him, believed in him and died upon that belief.

**SHĀHĪH:** correct, authentic. A ḥadīth which has a continuously linked *isnād*, of just, morally upright and precise narrators; containing no irregularity (*shādhab*) or hidden defect (*'illah*). Hence five conditions have to be met: the *isnād* being continuously linked; the justice (*'adl*) of the narrator; the precision (*dabt*) of the narrator; its not being

*shādb*; and its not containing an *'illah*. The ḥadīth can be *ṣahīh* in and of itself, or it can contain a defect but still be ruled to be *ṣahīh* due to supporting evidences.

**SALAF:** predecessors. Technically used to refer to the best generations of Muslims, the first three generation: the *Sahābah*, the *Tābi'ūn* and the *Tab' Tābi'ūn* due to the ḥadīth, 'The best of people are my generation, then the one that follows, then the one that follows.'

**SHIRK:** association, technically referring to directing a right that is due to Allāh Alone to another object of creation, either completely or partially. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

**SUNNAH:** way, path. The actions, words, descriptions, commands, prohibitions and tacit approvals of the Prophet (ﷺ).

**TĀBI'ŪN:** The generation following that of the Companions.

**TAB' TĀBI'ŪN:** The generation following that of the *Tābi'ūn*.

**TAQWĀ:** the basic meaning of which is setting a barrier between two things. This is why it is said that one *ittaqā* with his shield, i.e. he set it as a barrier between him and the one who wished him evil. Therefore it is as if the one who has *taqwa* (*muttaqī*) has used his following the commands of Allāh and avoiding His prohibitions as a barrier between himself and the Punishment. Hence he has preserved and fortified himself against the punishment of Allāh through his obeying Him.

**TARQ:** the practice of divination through drawing lines in the earth or equally the practice of throwing gravel onto the ground and divination by the shapes subsequently formed therein.

**TAWHĪD:** unification, monotheism, the belief in the absolute Oneness of Allāh. It is to believe that Allāh Alone is the creator, nourisher, and sustainer of the worlds; it is to believe that Allāh Alone deserves to be worshipped; and it is to believe that He has unique and perfect Names and Attributes that far transcend anything that one can imagine.

**TIYARAH:** seeing bad omens in things.

**WAHQDATU-L-WUJŪD:** The unity of existence, the heretical belief that Allāh is everywhere and everything.